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TO A POETESS.

BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

In the soft twilight, gentle Alice,
I drain to thee this golden chalice,
All glowing with the rich red wine
Pressed from the clusters of the vine,
That thou so oft hast seen in dreams,
Springing by Eden's sacred streams,
And watered by diviner showers
Than fall upon this earth of ours.

Queen of my soul, oh lovely Alice,
I'm with thee in thy bright dream-palace,
I mark each rich and wondrous gem
In thy poetic diadem.
I see thee in thy royal pride
Without a rival by thy side,
I see Fame's living lustre now
Circling around thy beaming brow,
While earth's proud spirits wildly throng
To list to thy bewitching song,
And, spell-bound by thy power divine,
Bow low before thy glorious shrine.

Star of my spirit, bright queen Alice,
Oh keep me ever in thy palace,
Let me be with thee when each thought
Of fire from heaven thy soul hath caught,
When o'er thy face sweet fancies flee
Like soft cloud-shadows o'er the sea,
When beauty like a humming-bird
The wild rose of thy heart hath stirred,
And all the Muses come to throw
Their garlands on thy brow of snow,
And hail thee, child of glorious mien,
Love's, Beauty's, Fame's, and Music's Queen.
But, when thy other guests are gone,
And thou and I are left alone,
Oh, for one blissful hour, lay down
The royal sceptre and the crown;
I'd win the *woman* to my side,
And not the Queen in queenly pride.

NORWOOD;
OR
VILLAGE LIFE IN NEW ENGLAND.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

[Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1867, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.]

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

CONVALESCENCE.

Heywood revived a little. But he was unable to stand, and it was necessary to carry him out of the gorge. It was not difficult to convey him to the opening. But here he was stopped. The only mode of entrance or exit was by a narrow ledge, some six feet above the brook, and this path was so difficult that each one was obliged to sustain himself by holding fast to the limbs of a spruce tree which, growing out of a rift in the rocks above, reached down its branches and afforded a safe hold. At the very turning point of the rock it was necessary to slip around a jutting corner in order to get securely upon the path on the other side. This feat, to one of moderately firm head, was not difficult or perilous. It was often accomplished, and had been, as we have seen, to-day, by ladies, and was a bit of bravery which enhanced the pleasure of an excursion to the glen. But a path which could be easily traced by a single person would be far more difficult when a party should attempt it bearing a helpless man in their arms. Various devices were suggested, but all seemed impracticable, and the counsellors were at a loss what steps to take. It was suggested that they should send down to Cathcart's for ropes, and fastening them to trees above, swing Heywood around the point; or draw him up the face of the rocks to the slope above, and convey him thence down an old charcoal-burners' road.

An exclamation of fear and wonder called all eyes to Pete's doings. He seemed to have taken in all the difficulties at a glance, and to have seen the easiest solution of them, provided one had strength enough, a good eye and sure foot. Without saying a word or asking permission, Pete took up Heywood, as if he were no heavier than Rose used to be when he strode all over the country with her, and laying him diagonally across his breast, so that his own long left arm passed under Heywood's right arm, over his loins, with a firm clasp, such as only great strength and length of limbs could have effected. But Heywood groaned with pain, and Pete relinquished this hold. After a moment's pause, Pete lifted Heywood again, and laying him back to back, so that his own head would come at Heywood's neck, he held him fast with his right arm upon his shoulder, leaving his left hand free for other purposes. Then, with short steps, he descended into the brook, which made its way out of the gorge through rocks lying in every position, sinking now into deep pools, then sliding over wide and slippery stones with a shallow sheet, and playing every other feat which an untamed mountain stream is wont to do. With a practiced eye Pete selected each point for his feet; with a sure foot he planted himself firmly on each selected spot—now wading, now with the help of a branch turning sharp angles, never baffled or for a moment perplexed, until, before those who took the regular path could get round below to the point where the stream issued from its rough rocky bed, Pete had come out triumphantly, and was walking rapidly through the woods to 'Biah Cathcart's wagon, in which Heywood was speedily conveyed to Cathcart's house.

It was with clouded face and more suffering than she had ever experienced that Rose followed with her father in the steps of the injured man. Alice, in full sympathy with Rose, seemed even more affected, but in a different way. They appeared to have changed natures—Rose was sunk in thought; Alice was demonstrative in her feeling. But neither of them spoke.

As soon as they arrived, Heywood was conveyed to the blue room opening out of the sitting-room. Upon an examination, it was found that two ribs had been fractured and he had received a blow upon the head,—whether severe or not, could not be determined except by after-symptoms. It was judged wise not to attempt to remove him to Mr. Chandler's, and, for several weeks, he was the guest of the Cathcarts.

The centre of authority in a household is permanent, but the centre of interest fluctuates almost from day to day: now, it is a little child around which all revolve; a long-absent friend, or a child returned from school, for a day or two, holds all other interests subordinate. But nothing transforms the house so instantly, and reaches out with such force to change the whole economy, as a sick-room. It is the heart of the house, and the pulse of the mansion beats according to its expansion or contraction. The patient, it may be, can neither speak nor see, yet any member of the family, rising up or sitting down, going out or coming in, is conscious that he is affected by the relations of his action to the comfort of the sufferer. And so sickness is a silent legislator, and lays its law upon the domestic commonwealth.

If Heywood had sought out a place in which to be sick, he could not have selected more skillfully. The social atmosphere of the place was cheering and soothing. The order and quietness of the household, that inexplicable *something* which makes some houses frigid and repulsive, and others genial and attractive,—a something made up in part by the dispositions and ways of the inmates, and in part too by the proportions and style of the rooms and passages, the colors and details of form—all contributed important elements.

The blue room was wainscotted for about four feet from the floor. The residue of the sides were papered with pale pearly blue. The ceiling had a faint tint of the same color.

In this room stood an old-fashioned *secretary* of solid mahogany; on another side the book shelves; and all the chairs were old-fashioned, heavy, and of mahogany. The windows, too, were old-fashioned, with small six-by-eight panes of glass, with inside folding shutters. From the bed one could look out into the sitting-room, through the open door, and through a window on its far side, the yard and its shrubbery could be seen, the western horizon, and the setting sun, which, when the curtains were removed, shot its last rays clear through the sitting-room across the floor of the blue room, where, from the opposite horizon, through its own windows, every morning the sunlight fell.

For a day or two Heywood seemed stupefied; then a slight fever arose; he was restless and wandering in mind. He seemed oblivious of the recent scenes, and made no allusion to persons or things in the north. Starting from a moment's sleep, he would call his mother; and when Rachel Cathcart, who was seldom beyond ear-shot, came to his side, a perplexed smile would come over his face, as if he was conscious that he had made some mistake, but was unable to discern what the mistake was.

During this time his aunt, Mrs. Chandler, remained continually with him, dividing the care with Rachel Cathcart.

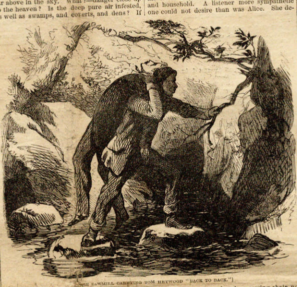
One morning, while Mrs. Chandler went home for an hour or two, Alice sat in Heywood's room. The window stood open. The autumnal sun and autumnal air gave a peculiar charm to the day.

Nature seemed as one who has been at a banquet. The hills glowed with brilliant colors. The near trees were like jovial maskers in a holiday. Many of the trees on which Alice's eye rested had been planted by her brother Barton, who, instructed by Dr. Wentworth's better knowledge, had selected them with reference to spring and autumn tints, as well as to their forms and relative harmonies. A clump of Norway spruces was fringed on one side with scarlet sumachs, a fine mountain ash relieved its clusters of berries against the dark green, and on one of the evergreens an ampelopsis had climbed, and peeped out in crimson here and there, up to the top, where it had completely covered the tips. There was something freakish in the gay and familiar way in which this brilliant vine took liberties with a sober tree, reminding one of the caprices which a pet child sometimes takes with a solemn old grandfather—climbing his shoulders, disarranging his hair, pulling at his sacred spectacles! Alice, like many another not given to talking, made up in musings and reveries. She was this morning full of nameless feelings, changing from light to dark almost as fast as the colors changed when her eye moved over the external prospect. Yet Heywood's very breath was audible to her ear, nor could he draw a long breath, nor move a hand without her notice. Thus the woman heart pulsed between affectionate duty and fanciful beauty. Now, she listened to murmurs of the bees, then to the pretentious buzzing of the flies, that seemed inspired to-day with more than usual affection. They insisted on familiarity. They refused to take offence at the utmost rudeness. Then she watched the spiders' webs which had been spread and hung in every direction, saying in herself—"How many hopes are like the spider's web, woven in the night, bright in the morning dew, perishing before the first footfall!" A cat, a pure Maltese, sat on the path making her toilet. She licked her paws, and then with them sponged her face, rubbing down her ears with the greatest care; and then she began licking her breast, bending her pliant neck as if intent upon reaching under her very chin. Alice smiled. She had seen other people who thought that their nature was changed because they had licked their breasts smooth. She turned to the bed! It was only a long breath—a sigh in his sleep!

A woodpecker, with little sharp claws that could hold its snug little body in any position, head up, head down, head sideways—ran nimbly round the tree, keenly inspecting each crevice, and probing here and there with its bill. The tree was miserably healthy, and this critic flew away with a harsh, grating note of disgust.

Surely he moved! No. His eyes are closed. He sleeps. Will he ever wake to consciousness and reason?

A crooning of hens and flutter of chickens drew her attention. A hawk was flying past, far above in the sky. What?—danger close up to the heaven? Is the deep pure air infested, as well as swamps, and coverts, and dens? If one creeps, there are creeping enemies. If one flies, there are winged pursuers!



[PETE SAWMILL CARRYING TOM HEYWOOD "BACK TO BACK."]

Some one called her:

"Alice!"

She started and went to Heywood. It was his first lucid morning.

"Where am I? What has happened?"

Alice in her joy could hardly answer his questions. Her face was radiant; but with strong restraint upon her feelings she quieted herself, as if afraid that talking might harm him. She told him simply that he had met with an accident; that he had been for more than a week here in her father's house; that Dr. Wentworth came every day to see him, and would soon be here and then, if *he* thought best, she would talk with him more.

The name of Dr. Wentworth seemed to catch his ear, and, as a clue, helped him to regain some faint hold of memory in the past.

"Wentworth? Ah—I remember. Were we not in the woods? Let us see. Did not something happen to Miss Rose? Was she hurt?"

Then an expression of sadness fell upon Heywood's face, and he half turned away from Alice, saying:

"No, no, no;—I remember."

The expression of joy and exhilaration which had lit up Alice's face passed away. She turned to the door to summon her mother. Dr. Wentworth was already with his hand upon the latch.

"Ah, Alice, how is our patient? Worse? Your face carries bad tidings."

"No, Doctor, good tidings. He is in his mind again."

"Well then, my dear, you could afford a gladder look for a friend's improvement. But I must see for myself."

Heywood improved every day after this, though at first slowly. His constitution had never been shaken by indulgent habits, and now he reaped the benefit of a virtuous and temperate life. The blow upon his head gave most concern to Dr. Wentworth, and a depression of spirits which hung upon him seemed to the doctor a not favorable sign. Still, as his symptoms steadily ameliorated, and his strength began to return, he was allowed to hear reading a little at a time. His aunt most frequently took the place of reader. But for some reason her manner of reading rendered Heywood nervous. On the other hand, Alice's voice and manner had a soothing and refreshing influence. Little by little this task fell almost exclusively to her. Her good nature and her kindness never wearied. Whatever she was doing, or however weary, the least hint by word or look was sufficient. Every day she culled from papers and from magazines such passages as she thought likely to please him, and was never better pleased herself than when Heywood's interest in her reading led him to remarks and conversation. After he had begun to sit up a portion of the day, the details of the accident by which he had been injured were told to him. But he recalled nothing distinctly. He remembered the nutting, and he had a faint impression of the glen into which the party had entered. But there was an indistinct impression on his mind that somehow Rose had been connected with his fall and injury. This subject seemed painful to Alice.

"Alice, were you there when I fell?"

"Yes. I saw it all. It was fearful beyond any experience of my life."

"I was climbing?"

"Yes—you had risen higher than the falls."

"And was Rose climbing?"

"No."

"How came she to fall, then?"

"She did not."

"How did I fall, then?"

"You slipped."

"And she held fast?"

"She had nothing to do with you."

"I am sure she had," said he, looking doubtingly at Alice.

But as the subject seemed unwelcome to the gentle Alice, after once or twice renewing his questions, he dropped the subject. As strength returned, so Heywood sought to relieve his kind friends of the tasks of nursing, or at least to lighten them. His thoughts naturally reverted to his Virginia home; and as he found Alice interested in his reminiscences, he was quite willing to solace himself by describing the scenes of his childhood, his father's plantation, mansion, and household. A listener more sympathetic one could not desire than was Alice. She delighted to sit upon her low sewing chair near the window. Thus the light was thrown upon Heywood's face, while her own was in shadow. Many of the happiest hours of her life were passed thus, and Alice began to dread the day when her gentle services should be no more needed.

October was ended. Its golden scroll was rolled up and put away. November had come, and its nightly frosts, its cold rains, its vigorous winds, had stripped the trees, and the forests were bare. Orchards yet maintained a show of damaged leaves. The white oak and the beech refused to part with all their foliage, and tufts of russet leaves clung to the ends of the branches, not in bravery and beauty, but as mourning weeds worn by trees disconsolate for the loss of summer. It was with surprise, when Heywood first went to his window, that he saw the change. A month had transformed the fields and hills. He had left them glowing with gorgeous colors. Now they were sad and sombre. Nor did he fail to draw an analogy between his own hopes then and his prospects now.

But great as had been the physical changes during his sickness and recovery, yet more wonderful changes had taken place in society than in nature. The great political contest had closed in the election to the Presidency of the United States of Abraham Lincoln—a name then but little known, but since spoken in every corner of Christendom, and added to the roll of those upon whom Time has no power. Of all the strifes and struggles Heywood knew nothing. And, as 'Biah Cathcart, little by little, detailed the narrative of events, and recounted the early steps that were then taking place in that great and terrible tragedy of civil conflict, Heywood, free from those influences which were swaying so many of his friends in Virginia, entered warmly into Cathcart's feelings for the integrity of the nation.

Heywood could not conceal from himself with what regrets he left this hospitable farm house of 'Biah Cathcart's to return to his aunt's. He had already staid a fortnight after Dr. Wentworth gave him permission to remove. There was a charm in its quiet which suited both his feelings and his physical condition. The family, too, grew upon his respect and affection. He found in 'Biah Cathcart, though simple and unpretentious, a degree of knowledge which would have been remarkable in a professional man, and which he would never have thought of looking for in a plain farmer. His wife, Rachel Cathcart, seemed like a second mother. With scarcely an element of character like his own mother, she yet produced upon Heywood the same effects that he remembered at home. Alice, too, on nearer acquaintance, and after her timidity was broken through, disclosed a wealth of character which he had not suspected.

It was not, however, till he had returned to Norwood that he became alive to the excitement which prevailed in the nation. The letters from his home gave evidence of the intensity of southern feeling.

A few extracts from his letters, written or received, will serve to shew the influences acting upon him.

* * * "Father says that separation will come, and he does not care how soon. If South Carolina goes out, and a convention is already called to frame an ordinance of secession, he says that every southern state will follow—will *have* to follow. He is quite enthusiastic about the Great Republic of the South; and he is doing all that he can to spread his sentiments among the gentlemen who visit us. He derides the idea of war! 'I can carry in this cup,' said he this morning at the breakfast table, 'all the blood that will be shed.' If the South are united, the North will never choose to resist. And if they do, he argues, there will never be more than a single fight. The Northern people, he says, handle tools too well to meddle with the sword. You know that he has great contempt for northern laborers. They are a sordid set, fit for drudgery, but not for fighting.

"He is vexed that you do not write. It is two months since we have heard a word from you. From some hints in your last letter, he suspects that you are entangled with some fair Yankee damsel; and sister says she knows who it is. Father frets and fumes. 'Every man that loves the South should be at his post. Tom has no business, when Virginia is getting ready to lead the new Republic, to be dallying in the North. He ought to shew his colors and stand up for his principles.' And so, you see, Tom, just what is going on here, and will know how to lay your course accordingly.

"Mother is well. We are all gay and lively, in spite of the times. Zanoni has recovered from his injury, and bears the saddle again. We are laying out for great sport this winter. Shall we have you to help?" * * * *

HEYWOOD TO HIS BROTHER HAL.

* * * "I do not wonder that my silence attracts attention. For, though I am not a very diligent correspondent at any time, yet I seldom allow ten weeks to pass without a letter. But you may now know,—I did not care that you should before,—that I have been confined to my room for some six weeks, on account of injuries received by a fall. I was climbing rocks, and fell more than thirty feet, breaking two ribs and receiving a severe blow upon my head. I have had much to sober me; much to give to life a more serious tone. If now the country shall rush into war, as I fear, it will be the climax of my trouble and I shall almost wish that the blow on my head had been some degrees harder. I cannot sympathize with my father. I am in a better situation to know these Northern people than he or any of our Southern friends can be. You may depend upon it that separation will not be peacefully allowed. There is an under spirit among this people that politicians don't take into account. The Southern opinion of their courage is founded upon a difference in the education, principles and spirit of the North and South, which makes it well nigh impossible for you to appreciate the reason of their seeming reluctance to fight. But should they once be aroused by circumstances which appealed to patriotism and duty, you may depend upon it that they will shew not only courage, but an indomitable perseverance which will wear out opposition. And should the question be Union or disunion—two nations or one United States—I am free to say that my heart goes with the old flag, and though I hope to be spared the dreadful necessity of lifting my hand against my own State, yet I should deem that, terrible as it would be, an evil less to be dreaded than to lift my hand against that flag of our fathers which gathers to its folds the dearest memories and the most honored associations of American history." * * * *

During the whole winter Heywood sought to shield himself from the turbulence of public feeling, which increased with every month. His health, though rapidly improving, was yet delicate, and rendered him specially liable to excitements. He fondly hoped that by some fortunate arrangement the great parties to the conflict might harmonize their differences, and secure that day of peace which for thirty years public men had hoped for and sought in vain.

It did not occur to him that the differences were radical, that should they be really brought into conflict one must destroy the other, and that they *were* being brought into conflict, by a course of events which moved with such breadth and power as to give all the signs that it was impelled by a Divine decree. As men, when a stream begins to rise over its banks, eagerly seek to stop the breach, to dam against the rising flood, and to control its ravages, which disdain all interference and sends them back in dismay to wait and watch what the waters will do, so the wise men and the managers found themselves dealing with uncontrollable events, that were working out their own career, and would not suffer men to restrain them.

About the middle of February, fearing the boisterous weather of March in Massachusetts and hoping by change of scene and association to put the finishing stroke upon his recovery, Heywood bid farewell to his friends in Norwood and left for New York, on his way to Charleston in South Carolina.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE OLD MAN'S JOURNEY.

Since winter shut in, in good earnest, and snows were deep, and the winds were searching, Tommy Taft found himself every month less able to get about. His last visit had been at Dr. Wentworth's, hoping to hear something about Barton Cathcart, whose continued absence the old man found it hard to bear. He asked no questions. The sturdy old fellow would scarcely be beholden to any one even for information. His own hands could no longer provide him the means of support. Charity he resented. Had it not been for the kindness of Dr. Wentworth and the Cathcarts he would have suffered. But through his wife, unknown to him, they contrived to supply his necessities under the color of his wife's earnings.

His last visit we said was at Dr. Wentworth's. It was a fine winter day, in January. It was one of those days in which nature is both brilliant and relentless. The sparkle of the air, the scope of the sunlight, the transparency of the atmosphere seem like kindness in nature. But out of that very nourishing air sweep sharp winds, whose temper is unmollified by the sun, and which turn all the radiance of the day to mockery. Did you never think of this? Then you have looked out of a parlor-window into this air; or, bundled up in furs, you have shot through the snow in a brilliant sleigh, protected from cold; or you have such vigor of health, that your warm blood, with merry rebound, beats off the assaulting frosts. But were you ever called out into such a day poorly clad, poorly fed, and with slender health? The great northerly winter rolls down her fleece upon her insentient family of sleeping children, and tucks up the flower-roots, and broods upon all the buried, waiting, hybernating creatures; and then, careless of the rest, she sings harsh songs in the woods, and roars all night through the air, as if men in hovels, in sick-rooms, in poor-houses,—the sick, the feeble, the old,—were none of her concern. And then, after one of those wild winter revels, when the snow has blinded the air, and whirled and sifted through every crevice, and heaped itself against fence and hedge, and settled down in sheltered places in mountain-drifts, how the morning will come in with open face and charming expression, as if there had been no quarrel all night, nor a saucy wind, nor a pitiless storm, but all was good and beautiful, and not nature, but the lame and feeble were at fault, if anybody was chilly, or cold, or suffering!

It was on just such a morning that Tommy Taft grunted and stopped, now and then, for breath, as he made his way to Dr. Wentworth's. He did not think all these fine things. And yet, that was about the meaning of his grunts, if he had had the fancy to unroll and interpret them to the best advantage. Agate Bissell saw him coming up the path. She went to the front door, in real kindness, opened it to the old man, saying:

"Really, Mr. Taft, I pity anybody who has to be out on so cold a morning."

"Thankee, marm, for nothing. Keep your pity for those that need it,—I don't."

"There's no use in being touchy. You are sick, Taft, and you know it. I think it would be better to let the doctor know, and see if he can't help you."

"He help me? That's good. What can he give me for eyes worn out. Eh? What's good for the innards pretty much used up. Eh? Do you think, Agate, he would give me anything for my wooden leg? Eh? It's getting monstrous heavy now-a-days."

There was something ghastly to pious Agate in such talking by a man seemingly not far from the grave; and though her genuine pity led her to forbear such a reply as she would once have given, yet she could not help saying:

"Taft, if you don't get help it's over with you. Honestly now, my friend, you seem to me to be not far from the grave."

"Jest as true as ye live, Agate. I've ben on the road to it seventy years, and I know I must be gittin' near it by this time. The grave is a tavern where a good many put up, Agate, and I never heerd that any body complained of his fare."

This was said in a peculiar tone that might be banter, or sad earnest, and Agate could not tell which. She looked earnestly at Tommy and said:

"Taft, have you made your preparations? Have you done anything to get ready?"

"I've ben gittin' ready as long as I can remember; and as to preparations, you know that Turfmould and I are neighbors, and he's agreed to do the right thing by me. Don't be afraid, Agate. I shall be a landholder before long. Turfmould makes good titles. I guess mine 'll hold."

"Taft, I don't know what to make of you."

"You don't need to make anything. I am made up already, and have been as long as I can remember, though if I was to be made up agin, Agate, I don't know anybody that would do it better than you, eh?" said Tommy, giving Agate one of those winks that acted upon her like a spark of fire upon powder.

She rose with the dignity of anger, and was spared the trouble of opening the door by Rose, who came in just as Agate was ready and anxious to pass out.

Rose went to the old man with an affectionate cordiality that seemed more like a child's love for a grandparent than the greeting of a neighbor or benefactor.

Tommy tried to rise, but Rose laid her hand on his shoulder familiarly and pressed him back into his chair.

"No, no; there is no use, Uncle, in ceremony. You are not strong. How pale your face is! Father tells me that the winter goes hard with you. I know you will be glad to know that we have heard from Barton Cathcart. He wrote to father on some business. He is very happy, and talks of living in the West."

"Living in the West?" said Tommy, with unaffected surprise, as if his feelings had been hurt; "*living* in the West? and I sha'n't see him agin? Die and not see the boy agin? I can't have it; indeed, Miss Rose, I can't. You must write and tell him so. There aint but one Barton Cathcart in this world, and, if other folks don't know his value, I do. I'd rather die to-morrow, if I could see him to-night, than live a year and not see him. I tell you, Miss Rose," said Tommy, with a solemnity which she had never seen him manifest before, "I can't die till I see Barton. I want to ask him something. I want to know——" and with that he hesitated, and looked at Rose almost imploringly. "I want to know something about it. If Barton says it's right, it's right, and I'll believe it."

Rose could make nothing out of these sentences. But looking at Tommy as if it was all plain, she said:

"Barton writes that he will be home in February, and I've no doubt he will make it all right."

"Comin' in February? Let's see, that 's three or four weeks. Mebbe that 'd be too late."

"Can I help you, Uncle Tommy? Am I not as good as Barton?"

Tommy had risen, and, looking at Rose with great kindness, said:

"Bless you, dear child, you're good enough to be Barton's own self; and—well I must hobble home. I'm afeered of an attack."

Tommy had become subject to paroxysms of severe pain in the stomach. During their continuance he was peculiarly unwilling to have any one present, even his wife. He would shut himself up in his loft and growl and groan by himself. These attacks were becoming more frequent, and the whole system was becoming weakened by this affection. To his daughter's inquiry, Dr. Wentworth replied:

"The disease is obscure. I suppose it to be a cancerous affection of the stomach. That it will prove fatal I do not doubt; but whether he will drop off suddenly, or be gradually worn out with suffering, I can not tell."

The old man bravely resisted all sympathy. He would allow no one to pity him. He had nothing to say about his own sufferings, and was angry at any allusion to them. Mother Taft, herself feeble, hovered around the old man with a kind, helpless pity, which she dared not speak, and could not hide. The most unlovely side of his character Tommy Taft showed to his wife. This habit was contagious, for several others in the village were known to have the same disagreeable trait. Fortunately, it was confined to the one sex!

As the old man rose to depart, Rose felt a presentiment that she should never see him again. She was just about leaving home to make a visit to her relatives in Boston, which should have been made during the holidays, but was prevented by her mother's transient illness. As he moved slowly toward the door, she recalled the days of her childhood, how many times he had frolicked with her, how many little games he had taught her, what funny stories he had invented to amuse her visits at his rude quarters, and her heart was deeply touched with the old man's sufferings, which, every time she saw him, seemed to be gaining ground. When Tommy turned at the front door, as Rose reached out her hand to say good-bye, a tear rolled down her cheek and fell upon the old man's hand.

"Good-bye, dear Uncle Tommy; I shall never meet you again, until we meet in Heaven."

At first the old man seemed annoyed at her feeling, and said somewhat harshly:

"What you cryin' for? I aint dead yet? That's funeral business." But, changing his tone, Tommy Taft for a moment seemed to identify Barton with Rose. Looking tenderly at her out from under his great, shaggy eyebrows, he said: "It's jest as like as not that what you say is true; and if I don't see him again, you tell him that I wanted him. I won't trust none of them folks to show me. It's a pretty dark way for a lame old man to be stumblin' in alone; and I shouldn't like to take the wrong turn, you know. This kind o' journey 's one a fellow can't go back on. If he gits wrong, why wrong it'll have to be; and if Barton was only here to show me the way—eh?"

Rose was deeply affected. She had never in all her life heard Taft speak of religion except in broad humor, and never at all in its relations to his own future condition. It was not the languid sentiment of one weakened by long sickness, nor the inspiration of fear. The old man would have been as sturdy and defiant as ever had one word been spoken amiss!

Rose knew, in spite of all his faults, the real depth of the old man's heart. She knew the rugged strength of his mind, and the unusual sagacity of his perceptions. Why was he lying useless at the bottom of society? His power should have ranked him among the first. To see such a one, peering into the dark future and confessing his inability to see how to tread its way, would have touched the sympathy of one far less sensitive than Rose.

Looking tenderly at the old man, Rose repeated the words:

"'Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.'"

"That's it," said the old man, "you've hit it exactly. If Barton was along I had as lief trudge as not."

"Barton could not help you. There is One who has said, 'I am the Way, and the Life,'—He can help you."

"I shouldn't wonder. But I know Barton, and he's got a head-piece. He's thought of all these matters, and aint tied up to old world notions; and if *he* says, 'Tommy, it's all real,' that's enough. You must understand, Miss Rose, that I don't care much about myself; but, do ye see, I'd like to keep along with Barton, and if I knew the track he's going to take, you may be sure you'd find me there."

If it had been Dr. Buell, he would not have suffered Tommy Taft to rest on any such human affection as a security in death. But Rose, without reflecting on the theological aspects of the case, was glad to see in the old man any thoughtfulness about dying, and she hoped that through his affection for Barton he might be led to a higher trust and a surer hope.

It was indeed the last time she ever saw Taft. Before her return from Boston both Tommy Taft and Barton Cathcart had left Norwood, the one on that road where travellers journey only one way, and Cathcart had gone to the great war which broke forth in the spring, like the conflagration of a continent.

For a week after this interview Tommy Taft was detained in the house by the severity of the weather. When the skies relented he was too weak to get about alone. Every week his anxiety increased to see Barton. Pain could not subdue his stubborn will. But no will could sustain the daily weakening body. It was the last week in February before the old man fairly took to his bed and gave up all hope of seeing Cathcart before he died. His spirits were depressed and his temper not the best. Dr. Buell, faithful to his fractious parishioner, still visited him from time to time, hoping that in some favorable hour he might cast light into his darkened mind. One day a knock sounded at his door.

"Come in,—or stay out, as suits ye best," said Tommy.

Dr. Buell entered.

"Come in, Doctor. You're always at work on the old sinner. Really, I had a pain this morning that liked to let me through."

"I hope, Taft, that you find yourself willing to depart, if it be God's will."

"Well, well, as to that, Doctor, I guess when a clock has run down it stops not because it has a mind to, but because it can't help it!"

"Yet, one may have Christian resignation to events which he cannot control. It is a very solemn thing to die, Taft, and the future is dark to those who have no hope in the Saviour."

"When a ship's driven in by gales, and has to make a harbor, it's mighty convenient to have a light-house; but if there aint any, why a feller must get in the best way he can."

"But there is a light. Christ is the light of the world. There is no need of darkness to one who trusts Him."

"That's so; that's good doctrine—sound views, no doubt. You was always very clear. I often said that if a man didn't understand you he needn't go to meetin' anywhere, for there wan't any better preachin' in the State."

In short, it was plain that Taft did not mean to talk about his feelings with the minister. Dr. Buell was deeply moved with pity. The old man's pale face, his weakness, the nature of his disease, indicated that he had not long to live. He hesitated a moment in doubt whether it would be worth while to suggest praying with the sick man, who sat propped up in bed.

"Taft, if it would be pleasant—if you desire it, that is—I shall be glad to pray with you."

"No objection in the world! If I was one of the elect I'd do it myself."

"Is there anything that you would like me specially to solicit?"

"If it's proper, and just the same to you, ask the Lord to send Barton Cathcart home, and let me see the boy once more afore I die!"

Tommy Taft had a large head and face. Usually there was a rugged and somewhat sharp expression to his features. But sickness had turned his face pale, his bushy side locks were very grey, and his eyes peered out from under his brow with more than common brightness. He did not shut them while Dr. Buell prayed. He looked over the form of the kneeling minister with an expression in which mirth was blended with pain. It seemed to say:

"Poor fellow! It don't take much to make you happy!"

It was very plain that Tommy did not accept any one as priest but Barton Cathcart, and that the only thread by which his rugged nature could be led was the single golden strand of affection.

He grew daily weaker, and more and more crabbed. It was a hard task for Mother Taft. He poured out words like paving stones upon her. He would agree to nothing, and seemed likely to go out of the world like a shaggy bear seeking his northern covert for hybernation. On the first day of March it was, that Tommy Taft had been unquietly sleeping in the forenoon, to make up for a disturbed night. The little noisy clock,—that regarded itself as the essence of a Yankee, and ticked with immense alacrity, and struck in the most bustling and emphatic manner,—this industrious and moral clock began striking, whir-r-r, *one;* whir-r-r, *two;* whir-r-r, *three;* (Tommy jerked his head a little as if something vexed him in his sleep;) whir-r-r, *four;* whir-r-r, *five;* whir-r-r, *six;* ("Keep still, will ye? let me alone, old woman! d—— your medicine;") whir-r-r, *seven;* whir-r-r, *eight;* ("God in Heaven! as sure as I live," said Tommy, rubbing his eyes as if to make sure that they saw aright;) whir-r-r, *nine;* whir-r-r, *ten!* Then, holding out his arms with the simplicity of a child, his face fairly glowing with joy, and looking now really noble, he cried:

"Barton,—my boy, Barton,—I knew you wouldn't let the old man die, and not help him! I knew it! I knew it!"

After the first surprise of joy subsided, Tommy pushed Barton from the edge of his bed:

"Stand up, boy; turn round! There he is! Now I'm all right. Got my pilot aboard. Sealed orders—ready to sail the minit the hawser 's let go."

After a few words about his return from the West, his health, and prospects, the old man returned to the subject that seemed to lie nearest his heart.

"They've all had a hand at me, Barton. There's twenty firms in this town that is willin' to give a feller sailin' orders, when they see he's out'ard bound. But I am an old salt—I know my owners!" said Tommy, with an affectionate wink at Barton.

"Oh, my boy, you're back agin; it's all right now. Don't you let me go wrong. I want you to tell me just where you're goin', and I'll bear right up for that port! You know, Barton, I never cheated you, when you was a boy. I took care of ye, and never told you a lie in my life, and never got you in a scrape. You won't cheat an old man now, will ye?"

It was all that Barton could do to maintain his self-possession. Tears and smiles kept company on his face.

"My dear old Tommy, we won't part company. We're both bound to the same land. God will, I fervently hope, for Christ's sake, forgive all our sins, and make us meet for everlasting life!"

"Amen!" roared out the old man. "Go on. You *really* believe in it? Come here, Barton, sit down on the edge of the bed, look me in the face, and no flummery,—do you really believe that there's another world?"

"I do, Tommy, I believe it in my very soul!"

"That's enough! I believe it too, jest as sartain as if a shipmate had told me about an island I'd never seen, but he had."

"Now, Barton, give me the bearin's of't. D'ye believe that there's a Lord that helps a poor feller to it?"

"I do. Christ loves me, and you, and all of us. He is glorious in love; and for no other reason in the world than because He loves to do kind things, He saves all who trust Him."

"He don't stand on particulars, then? He won't rip up all a feller's old faults, will he?—or how's that? Don't you ease up on me, Barton, just to please me, but tell me the hardest on't. I believe every word you say."

Barton's own soul had travelled on the very road on which Tommy was now walking, and remembering his own experience, and some of those wonderful crystals which he had dug out of the ridges of the Old Testament, and which he had set in his memory with even more feeling than before, made up in part by the renewal of his own former experiences, he repeated to Tommy these words, saying to him:

"Tommy, if I was describing a man to you, you would take him to be just what I say, wouldn't you?"

"Sartain!"

"Well, this is God's nature. You are going toward him, and ought to know how to behave."

"That's as true as the compass. Didn't I tell ye, old woman, when Barton came it would be plain sailin'?"

> "'And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.
>
> "'Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the *guilty;* visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth *generation.*'—Exodus, xxxiv: 8, 9.

"Then again, Tommy, hear this:

> "'Who *is* a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the last of his heritage? he retained not his anger for ever, because he delighteth *in* mercy.
>
> "'He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.'"—Micah, vii.: 18, 19.

"Now that's to the p'int, Barton. The Lord will tumble a feller's sins overboard like rubbish, or bilge-water and the like when a ship is in the middle of the ocean? Well, it would puzzle a feller to find 'em agin after that. Is that all? I'm to report to Him?"

"Yes, Tommy; you are to report to God just as I should report to you if you was a ship owner, and I was the captain, and had made mistakes and losses on the voyage. Suppose you loved me just as you do now, and I was to come back to you and make a clean breast of it, what would you do to me?"

"Do? You know what I'd do? I'd say—Barton, hold your yawp; not another word atween us. I care more for *you* than for every d—— dollar of the cargo."

Barton did not stop for Tommy's adjectives.

"That's just what God says to us: 'All his transgressions that he hath committed they shall not be mentioned unto him.' 'Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die, saith the Lord God?'"

"Well, now, this is honorable! It makes a feller feel mean, though, Barton, when he's treated so, and then thinks what sort of a feller he's been."

Barton then read from the fifteenth chapter of Luke to the old man the parable of the prodigal son.

"Barton, would ye jest as lief do me a little favor as not?"

"What is it, Taft?"

"Would ye mind sayin' a little prayer—for me—it makes no difference of course; but jest a line of introduction in a foreign port sometimes helps a feller amazin'ly."

Barton knelt by the bedside and prayed. Without reflecting at the moment on Uncle Tommy's particular wants, Barton was following in prayer the line of his own feelings; when, suddenly, he felt Tommy's finger gently poking his head.

"I say, Barton, aint you steerin' a pint or two off the course? I don't seem to follow you."

A few earnest, simple petitions followed, which Taft seemed to relish.

"Lord forgive Tommy Taft's sins! ("Now you've hit it," said the old man, softly.) Prepare him for Thy kingdom. ("Yes, and Barton too!") May he feel Thy love, and trust his soul in Thy sacred keeping. ("Ah, ha! that's it—you're in the right spot now.") Give him peace while he lives. ("No matter about that—the doctor'll give me opium for that! go on.") And, at his death, save his soul in Thy kingdom, for Christ's sake. Amen."

"Amen. But didn't you coil it away rather too quick?"

The fact was, that Barton was not used to the office of public prayer, and still less to the running commentaries of Tommy Taft, which, though helpful to the old man, were of no assistance to Barton.

"Now, Barton, my boy, you've done a good thing. I've been waitin' for you all winter, and you didn't come a minit too soon. I'm tired now; but I want you to come back to-morrow. I've got somethin' to tell you. I never let you know nothin' about my life, and I've a mind to tell you. Oh, it was a cruel shame for my uncle to treat me so! I might have made a man if I'd had half a chance. No matter. But I want to say one thing: Barton, when I'm gone, you won't let the old woman suffer? She's had a pretty hard time of it with me. She's like a sparrow that builds its nest in a thorn-bush. I knew you would. One thing more, Barton," said the old man, his voice sinking almost to a whisper, as if speaking a secret from the bottom of his soul, "Barton, you know I never had much money. I never laid up any—couldn't. Now you won't let me come on to the town for a funeral—will ye? I should hate to be buried in a pine coffin, at town expense, and have folks laugh that didn't dare open their head to me when I was 'round town! And then, Barton, you'll put old Smasher in with me! Of course, it ain't any matter, but I'd rather take my leg along, if it's all the same to other folks!"

Barton could not forbear smiling, as the old man, growing visibly feebler every hour, went on revealing traits which his sturdy pride had covered when he was in health.

"And, Barton, I wish you'd let the children come when I'm buried. They'll come if you'll just let 'em know. Always trust the children! And—(pain here checked his utterance for a moment)—and, let's see, what was I saying. Oh, the children. I don't want nothin' said. But if you'd jest as lief let the children sing one of their hymns, I should relish it."

The color came suddenly to his cheek, and left as suddenly. He pressed his hand over his stomach, and leaned his head further over on his pillow, as if to wait till the pang passed. It seemed long. Barton rose and leaned over him. The old man opened his eyes, and with a look of ineffable longing, whispered:

"Kiss me."

A faint smile dwelt about his mouth; his face relaxed and seemed to express happiness in its rugged features. But the old man was not there. Without sound of wings, or footfall, he had departed on his last journey!

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

DID SHE DECIDE WISELY?

BY MARY GRACE HALPINE.

"I did not think you could be so foolish, Agnes. What! jealous of a mere child like Kate?"

The speaker was a man between thirty-five and forty, but whose almost boyish elasticity of spirits made his years sit lightly upon him. Handsome he certainly was; kind-hearted and generous, all could testify who knew him, and yet upon his countenance was written: *Unstable as water, thou shalt not prosper.*"

The person addressed was in the full maturity of womanhood, with a thoughtful and earnest look in her face, that showed that she had felt and suffered beyond the majority of her sex.

"Kate is not a child, but a woman, Arthur," she replied; "a very pretty woman, as no one knows better than you, who have experienced so often her bewitchments."

Arthur Reeves looked sharply at his companion, as if to ascertain how much or how little she knew.

Agnes understood that look, and said steadily, though her cheek flushed with the effort it cost her:

"I saw you beneath the great elm last evening. I had heard many things before, but could not credit them, but the evidence of my own senses I must believe."

Arthur colored with both shame and anger.

"Go on," he said, with forced coolness; "I suppose I may as well take my lecture now as any time."

"I am not going to lecture you, Arthur,—nor even reproach you; the time for that has passed. I simply wish to convince you that you have been mistaken in the feelings that you have professed to cherish for me; that we have *both* been mistaken—you in me, and I in you."

"I love you, Agnes. You know, or ought to know *that.*"

"And yet I am not sufficient for you! Your eyes, if not your lips, have said the same to Kate Norton as well as many others."

"This is the sheerest folly, Agnes! My feelings for Kate are as pure as those I cherish for my little sister Ellen."

"If you think so you deceive yourself. And whether it be so or not, it is evident that the feelings aroused in *her* heart are of a far different nature. Not that I wish to imply that they are any more than those she has entertained for a dozen others, or, in fact, would feel for any passably good-looking man who paid her the same attentions that you do."

"You do Kate great injustice, Agnes; she is as innocent-hearted as a child."

"You must have a strange idea of the innocence of childhood. Kate Norton had little reputation to lose before she met you; she has less now. Whether all the stories are true that are afloat about her in her native village, I cannot say; but this I know, that she must have been more than imprudent to have given rise to them. A girl that can openly boast that there is not a married lady of her acquaintance but what is jealous of her, has as little principle as delicacy; for she could not produce this effect without designedly appealing to the worst passions of the human heart."

"I know Kate has been talked about; but I don't believe one word of what they say. But that is the way with women; they are always uncharitable to their own sex."

"We are often more clear-sighted; not being blinded by the wiles and flatteries that a pure-minded woman would disdain to use. No one knows better than you, Arthur, that I am *not* uncharitable. From Mary Ellis, the homeless and motherless girl, who erred in loving too well, I did not stand aloof; but for the artful woman who, though young in years, has sowed discord in so many homes, alienated so many hearts, I have nothing but contempt."

"I tell you again, Agnes, that I do not care for Kate. I have paid her some attentions, it is true, but it is because I know she has few pleasures, and I wanted to make her stay as pleasant as possible."

"And yet, when, after months of close confinement in the school-room, I sought a brief respite from many cares, the change of scene and air I so sorely needed, you did not think it necessary to devote yourself so assiduously to me, who, if half your assurances are to be believed, has a claim upon you more sacred than any other. You could even leave me alone for days,—not on account of business, that I could have pardoned, but in pursuit of pleasures, in which I had no share."

Arthur Reeves winced at these words; for conscience told him how often, and in how many ways, he had lavished the time and means that rightfully belonged to others. But he was not one that could bear chiding, and said, impatiently:

"You are jealous, Agnes; and a jealous woman can never see things as they are."

"I am not jealous. I feel that you have wronged me, and that you are wronging yourself far more. I am no longer willing to have so many rivals in your heart. I have given too much to be content with so little."

"You are not capable of real affection, or you could not reason so coolly."

"You cannot think so. Little as you valued it, deeply as you have wounded it, there is a feeling of pity for you in my heart, as I think that no one will ever love you again as I have loved you, for such love comes to man but once in a lifetime."

"As you *have* loved me, Agnes?"

Arthur Reeves' great charm was his melodious voice, and there was an inflection of tenderness in these words that few women, who loved him, could have resisted. Agnes turned away her head that he might not see how white were the quivering lips that said:

"As I *have* loved you, Arthur. It is better to speak of it thus, now that I am clearly convinced that a marriage would make us both wretched. You should marry some one who loves you less exclusively—less exactingly, if you will; for those that give much require much."

The two had been walking along a wooded path. They had now reached the brow of a hill, from which diverged two paths—one leading to Agnes's quiet cottage home, which gleamed out whitely through its wealth of foliage in the valley beneath, the other to the village, whose glittering spires could be seen in the distance.

"Our paths lie separate here, Arthur."

"And our life-paths as well? Is that what you wish to say, Agnes?"

"'Our life-paths as well?' For your peace as well as mine it is best that it should be so. But I shall pray for your happiness always."

No one but God knew all it cost her to utter those calmly-spoken words—certainly not the man who, winning that brave but loving heart, had held it so lightly.

Motionless, with arms folded tightly across his chest, he watched gloomily her retreating form. Perhaps there was a faint hope in his heart that she would pause, or turn her head; but Agnes was not the woman to falter or look back in the path she had chosen. She kept steadily on, not even turning when she reached the door, which, closing upon her, shut him out as completely from her heart and life, as he well knew, as if he had never been. Then he felt as he never had before, if not all that she had, all that she might have been to him. How far dearer she was to him than those whose smiles and blandishments had caused him to wound again and again the faithful heart that had never once swerved from its allegiance.

It was Arthur Reeves' misfortune that he could not resist the voice of flattery, especially from the lips of a pretty woman. Did such smile upon him, praise his soft, wavy hair, or hang upon his accents with a delight, partly real, partly feigned, for the time being, she swayed and seemed to fill his heart wholly.

He wooed Agnes Irwin eagerly and persistently—for she was not a woman to be won unsought—never resting until he knew that her whole heart was his. It was not that he did not know how rich was the treasure he had won; to be loved so entirely and exclusively would have been gratifying to any man; but he was one of those with whom a love once won has lost half its charm. He was the life and soul of the social gathering—not only kind-hearted and generous, but liking to appear so; and he would not, even to please her, forego the freedom to which he had been accustomed, or any incense to his vanity which might present itself.

Often, when he saw how deeply his conduct had wounded her, he would exert all his powers to banish it from her mind; and, too glad to believe his assurances, in his presence she would forget all; but the pain was only lulled; in his absence the wounds still rankled, causing her many gloomy and sorrowful hours.

Had Agnes essayed the wiles and blandishments of her temporary rivals, she might have obtained a stronger influence over his heart; but this she was too conscientious to do. At times she was demonstrative enough in her love to have satisfied the most exacting lover, but never to gain any point. In their differences, and they were frequent, she appealed to his reason and conscience, and not to the impulses by which he was most easily swayed; often assuring him that she did not want him to yield his opinion simply to please her, but because it was just and reasonable.

Arthur made no attempt to change a purpose that he well knew was unchangeable. He married a few months after; and no one prayed more fervently for his happiness than did she from whose life he had taken much of its bloom and brightness.

And what of Agnes? Is hers never to be the crown of wifehood, the sweet joy of maternity? We cannot tell. Even in this world, there is much to be done besides "marrying and giving in marriage." But this we know, that she took up her life-work earnestly and hopefully. That hers is the joy of which nothing can deprive her—the peace of a pure heart and a quiet conscience.

Did she never repent her decision? We shall see.

Some years after, when what we have related was looked back upon as a troubled dream, in taking up a paper, her attention was arrested by the following paragraph:

> "We learn that Arthur Reeves, a well-known merchant in ——, has eloped with a gay young widow. The guilty pair left for Europe in the last steamer. The scoundrel leaves behind him a wife, whose conduct has been irreproachable, and three children. We understand that Mrs. Reeves returned yesterday to her father's house, which she left six years ago, apparently, as happy a bride as the sun ever shone on."

When the shock that this gave her had subsided, what grateful emotions swelled her heart that hers were not those worse than fatherless children; that she was not that more than widowed wife, returning in shame and sorrow to her father's house!

The fate of Arthur Reeves can be told in few words. A few months of sinful pleasure with the partner of his guilt; then weariness, disgust, and final separation. A death-bed, above which no sorrowing friend bent, and a nameless grave!

Thus it is with those who dally with temptation. Who fancy that they can say to the tumultuous sea of human passion: "*Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed.*"

ENVY.

Envy is a displeasure for some supposed advantage in another. The object of this passion is something more desirable; and although excellency, precisely considered, cannot occasion dislike, yet excellency misplaced may. The envious believes himself eclipsed by the lustre of his neighbor; that which is good in itself becomes an evil to him, and makes him wish it either removed or extinguished. Envy, like a cold poison, benumbs and stupefies; and thus, as if conscious of its own impotence, it folds its arms in despair, and sits cursing in a corner. When it conquers, it is commonly in the dark, by treachery and undermining, by calumny and detraction. Envy is no less foolish than detestable; it is a vice which they say keeps no holiday, but is always working upon its own disquiet.

◆

TRUTH AND FALSEHOOD.—Falsehood flies swift as the wind, and Truth creeps behind her at a snail's pace. But Falsehood makes so many twistings and turnings, that Truth, keeping steadily on, looking neither to the right nor the left, overtakes her before long.

◆

COURAGE AND MODESTY.—Courage and modesty are the least dubious of all the virtues, for they cannot be counterfeited; and they have this in common, that both are manifested by the same color.

THE CONFESSION.

BY JOSEPHINE POLLARD.

Her forehead wore a frown when first I met her;
Stony and white, among the flowers she stood,
Crushing with all her might the fatal letter,
That in a moment had so changed her mood.
grieved that aught should trouble or distress her;
My heart would fain have borne me to the spot,
Where I might soothe my darling and caress her,
But fate withheld me—for she knew me not.

She knew me not, indeed; though many a token
Of tenderness I scattered in her way;
Yet friendship kept the seal of love unbroken,
As though the secret it must not betray.
I could not dare to give my soul expression
Until I saw her truly "face to face;"
I could not choose to grant a free confession
Unless she offered me some sign of grace.

Oh, when she smiles it is the hour of danger,
For Cupid stores his weapons in her eyes;
To those sweet darts I own I'm not a stranger,
And she perchance has seen through my disguise.
Oh darling! I have not the heart to scold you;
Whatever mood you fancy for the while
Is full of grace; and yet I would behold you
With no one else beside us when you smile.

So days went by; the silence was unbroken;
An unseen spirit walked between us two,
And sealed the lips that long ago had spoken
If Love had not concealed the half he knew.
But when I saw her one sweet morn in summer,
Weeping beside her mother's grave, alone,
In tears I knelt, and wrung confession from her,
Then claimed her heart, and gave her all my own!

THE GENTLEMEN'S PIC-NIC.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

"Let's have a pic-nic, all by ourselves," said Mr. Frank Elleray, taking his cigar out of his mouth with great solemnity.

"Wouldn't it be rather slow without any girls along—something like the play of Hamlet, with the part of Hamlet left out?" queried John Marvin. "Never heard of a pic-nic without a lot of girls."

"I don't propose to have a pic-nic without any girls, *stu-pid!*" retorted Elleray, severely.

"Then I'll thank you to state distinctly what you *do* mean!"

"Well, then, listen all of you! The girls here are getting restive——"

"Girls always do," interposed Walter Raymond.

"And seem to have an idea," solemnly went on Frank, "that nothing can be done without *their* help and sanction—a natural delusion, perhaps, but still a delusion."

"Of course it's all nonsense," remarked Mr. Marvin.

"They must be put down," enunciated Cornelius Dalley.

"And we're the fellows to do it," said Raymond.

"But, look here," said Elleray, "it must be done in a gentlemanly sort of way—something dignified, you know; they must be made to feel themselves entirely secondary."

"Yes," said Cornelius, dubiously, (he had six sisters,) "but how are you going to do it?"

"Cornelius, 'Speech is silver, Silence is golden,'—if you *would* oblige me by holding your tongue for four consecutive minutes——"

"I'm shut up, old fellow; fire away."

"If there are occasions on earth on which women naturally get the upper hand, they are a wedding and a pic-nic," proceeded Mr. Elleray. "As far as the weddings go, I don't see any way to help ourselves—that is, as long as men *will* make fools of themselves; but, in the pic-nic business, there's no reason why we shouldn't assert ourselves."

"The cake, you know," suggested one Richard Ferrington, "and the ice-cream?"

"We can buy cake, and every fellow can levy a contribution on his domestic larder. *Such* a pic-nic as we'll have! and invite all the girls! and, I tell you what, boys, it shall be a moonlight pic-nic! Anybody can get up a broad-day affair, but moonlight will be *recherché*, you know."

"Where?" rather doubtfully questioned Ferrington.

"Oh, I know a jolly place up the river, and we'll have some violins and a dance, and teach the girls what's what. But, mind you, secrecy is the very foundation of the whole affair—let no whisper escape you! Just invite the girls to meet us down by the river at eight, Monday night."

"Agreed!" cried the admiring chorus. "But——"

"*Will* you hold your tongues?" reproachfully demanded their leader. "There's nothing like method in these things. Raymond, you shall hold yourself responsible for the sandwiches—cut 'em *thin*, with lots of mustard."

"I can do it easily," exulted Walter, "my sister is out of town, and I can send the girl out on an errand, and lock the children down cellar. Thin, with lots of mustard—that's the talk."

"Marvin, you may supply the pickles."

"Yes, but——"

"No buts. If you can neither beg, borrow, nor steal, then buy! Let me see: Raymond, sandwiches; Marvin, pickles; Dalley, plum-cake, and plenty of it; Ferrington, pound-cake and fancy fixings; Smith, oranges, and pine-apples, and peanuts——"

"Who ever heard of peanuts at a pic-nic?" inquired the discontented Smith.

"Didn't I tell you I want to be original? I'm afraid ice-cream is a peg or two beyond us, but I don't much care. Larkins, you may bring ice, sugar, and lemons, and I'll contribute a basket of champaigne!"

The countenances of the six brightened instantaneously.

"I must say that's doing it very handsomely," cried Marvin, who was still musing darkly on the subject of pickles. "And——"

"Remember!" impressively pronounced the master-spirit, "Monday is the day, eight the hour, and secrecy the watchword!"

And so the conspiring band separated, to make preparation for the affair that was to "put down" the girls of Sandbrook so effectually.

Walter Raymond nearly cut off the forefinger and thumb of his left hand, slicing bread for sandwiches, and smelt like a mustard-factory for two days afterwards; while Bridget marvelled much as to what had become of her Friday's baking of bread. Corney Dalley, as he was familiarly called, bought plum-cake enough to victual a garrison, and, not knowing what else to do with it, locked it neatly away in the drawer, where his mother kept her only black silk-dress. Dick Ferrington brought a bandbox full of maccaroni and cream-kisses down to the law-office, where he was engaged in fathoming the mysteries of Kent, Blackstone, and Wendell's Reports. All were in an advanced stage of preparation, except poor Jack Marvin.

"Look here, Elleray!" he cried, grasping his principal by the third button of his coat, at seven o'clock on Saturday night, "there's not a pickle to be had in this town for love or money,—what the mischief is a fellow to do?"

Frank Elleray looked calmly down upon his despairing comrade from the height of a serene philosophy.

"Do? why, make 'em, of course!"

"Make pickles?"

"What are pickles but a lot of cucumbers, with vinegar thrown over 'em?"

"Frank, you're a genius!" exclaimed Marvin.

Late that night, Mrs. Marvin descried a figure groping among her cucumber vines.

"Jack, is that you? what on earth are you doing?"

"M—making a bouquet," stuttered our hero, retreating rapidly with both arms full of the largest and ripest cucumbers he could select, to the pail of vinegar he had hidden behind the barn.

"I declare," said Jack to himself, as he splashed the cucumbers one by one into the acid liquid, "I hadn't any idea housekeeping was so easy!"

The eventful evening arrived—a delicious moon rising above the horizon, and a breeze, soft as the gales of Bendemeer, rippling the mirror-like surface of the river. The ladies of Sandbrook, in a delightful flutter of curiosity, expectation and uncertainty, were assembled in the woodland dell, where a level sweep of velvety grass, enclosed by magnificent forest trees, formed a ball-room ceiled in by stars and full of fragrant odors. Just beyond, a little streamlet ran babbling down the slope, emptying its crystal tides into the river in a natural cascade, beneath which Mr. Elleray had disposed his champagne in stately rows.

"*There's* a wine-cellar for you," said Frank. While the other refreshments, neatly stowed away beneath the spreading branches of a magnificent hemlock tree, made no paltry display.

"We'll show 'em what we can do," chuckled Mr. Ferrington; and with this the Refreshment Committee scrambled up the bank and joined their companions.

"What are we going to do, Mr. Elleray?" chirped the ladies in chorus.

"Do? We're going to have a pic-nic, to be sure."

"And *such* a table of refreshments!" crowed the irrepressible Ferrington, whereupon his comrades all turned upon him, as the Masonic Order might have turned upon the luckless Morgan.

In another five minutes a ruddy blaze sent its column of flame up towards the star-sown sky, throwing red lustre to the very farthermost angles of the dell, and contrasting picturesquely with the silver glimmer of the full moon.

"Strike up, musicians!" cried Elleray, and in another moment the merry dancers were flying over the green.

"I think it will be a success," said Raymond, rubbing his hands gleefully.

"Think!—I'm sure of it," said Marvin, loftily. "Why I've got cucumbers enough to——"

"Hush—sh—sh!" whispered Elleray, in a sibilant tone, as two or three white-robed damsels flitted past.

"We're hungry, Mr. Elleray," said Kitty Singleday, a fair-haired little sylph with blue eyes and a complexion like newly-fallen rose-leaves.

"Isn't it almost time for refreshments?" asked Miss Clara Rodney, a brunette, with eyes of Spanish brilliance and braids of jetty hair.

"All in good time, fair ladies," said Elleray, laughing. "Now I'll wager a pair of gloves you don't give us credit for ingenuity enough to get up a supper. Just wait and see—that is all I have to say. Jack, get up a lancers, and look sharp about it."

No sooner were the ladies fairly absorbed in this new amusement than Frank Elleray tied a towel over his snowy vest, rolled up his sleeves and prepared for action.

"Boys, lend a hand!" he cried, authoritatively. "Let the other fellows do the dancing—the Committee must be on hand to help make up a *tout ensemble*, which shall teach the girls a thing or two. Bring on your sandwiches, Raymond—get the lemonade ready, Larkins, and——"

"But we haven't any tumblers!" interrupted Larkins—"nor plates, nor cups!"

"The—deuce—we—haven't!" cried the chairman of the Committee. "Why didn't somebody think of 'em!"

A blank silence ensued—everybody looked at everybody else, reproachfully.

"We can't think of everything!" said Smith.

"No—of course we can't," chimed in Larkin. "They won't expect it—a pic-nic wouldn't be a pic-nic if people remembered everything."

"Well, bring on the wine, Ferrington; we can at least drink out of the bottles. Suppose the eatables are all brought here, and we'll arrange 'em at once."

Presently Richard Ferrington returned with a puzzled face.

"Frank, where did you put the wine? I can't find it!"

"Under the cascade, you goose."

"Well, it isn't there."

"Pooh! I'll go for it myself. You ought to have brought your spectacles, Dick."

But he had not turned before Raymond's head appeared above the bank.

"I'm blessed if I can find the basket of sandwiches!"

"And the bandbox of cake and maccaroni is gone!" croaked Corney Dalley.

Elleray thrust them aside and dashed impatiently down the bank.

"Some people don't know how to use their eyes," he muttered. "If—— hal—lo!"

There was the cascade, talking to itself as merrily as ever, and there was the old hemlock, spreading out its drapery of black-green garments; but that was all. Wine, fruit, refreshments, had disappeared utterly.

"Such a lot of mustard as there was in the sandwiches," groaned Raymond, eyeing his bandaged forefinger.

"And my pickles—some of 'em as big round as your arm!" added Jack.

"It's the champagne that goes to *my* heart!" sighed Larkens.

"Boys," said Elleray, in a husky tone, "we have been followed; a thief has been in our midst!"

"And there he is now. I see him!" shouted Ferrington, tumbling head over heels down the steep bank in his enthusiasm. "Thieves! Robbers! Murder!"

The musicians abandoned their instruments; the ladies screamed in shrill chorus; the gentlemen rushed frantically in various directions, making the shadowy solitudes of the old woods ring with their vituperative shouts.

"Here he is!"

"No he isn't either; it's nothing but a stump."

"Catch him!"

"Close in, boys!"

And various other war-cries of similar import, each one inflaming the rage of the pursuers to a still higher degree.

"Here he is, slinking between the trees. I've caught him!" roared Larkins; and there was a crash of some falling body, Larkins clinging desperately to his prey.

"It's only the big bass viol, and Mr. Larkins has broken it all to pieces!" cried Miss Creswick, who was first on the scene of action.

"I knew it was *something*," said Mr. Larkins resolutely, and the ladies swarmed around him as round a hero.

Presently Dick Ferrington returned, at a slow and leisurely pace, rubbing his bruised elbows, and vainly endeavoring to smooth down the angles of his crushed hat.

"Did you see him, Dick?"

"Where did he run to?"

"Was he a small man or a large one?"

"How did he escape?"

"Who?" demanded Mr. Ferrington, rather brusquely. "It was only a black cow. I—I thought I'd just drive her away lest she should frighten the ladies, you know."

"And was all this outcry about a black cow and a bass viol?" demanded Miss Creswick.

But nobody answered. Perhaps the gentlemen did not hear. At all events, there the pursuit ended—a pursuit to which no "border raid" on record can offer an exact parallel.

"But when are we to have our supper?" demanded the fair little Mrs. Rock, opening her violet eyes very wide.

"Ladies," said Mr. Elleray, courageously placing himself in the breach, "I am very sorry, but—but our supper has been stolen, champagne and all."

"And a lot of the biggest pickles you ever saw," murmured Marvin, softly.

"And peanuts," sighed Mr. Smith.

"To say nothing of various other viands," interrupted Elleray, who saw Raymond anxious to put in a word on the merits of the sandwiches. "We can only apologize, hoping our fair guests will take the will for the deed. Musicians! strike up once more."

The second quadrille was hardly over when Mrs. Rock and Miss Creswick came forward.

"Gentlemen, we are very sorry *your* supper has been a failure; will you honor us by partaking of *ours?*"

And there on a level spot, where the moon shone down with unclouded splendor, the little witches had spread their table with champagne, sandwiches, and all the et ceteras, not forgetting peanuts and cream kisses.

The gentlemen at one glance recognized their carefully provided banquet. They looked blankly at one another.

"Why—where——" began Frank Elleray, but Miss Rodney interrupted him.

"Don't ask any questions, Mr. Elleray. As we understood it, this pic-nic was destined to 'teach us a thing or two,' strictly in a 'dignified, gentlemanly sort of way.' Perhaps we have been able to teach *you* that we are not entirely secondary. Pray take seats."

They obeyed, looking a little sheepish, and eyeing one another in a "how-do-you-suppose-they-found-out?" sort of way; but, man-like, they were too much rejoiced at the happy reappearance of their supper to take any farther exceptions.

"But where are my pickles?" demanded Mr. Marvin.

"What? those horrid seed-cucumbers? We threw them into the river!"

(Jack has never said a word about the facility of housekeeping since.)

"We slipped down and took 'em all away while you were busy directing the dancing," said Miss Singleday.

"It was *such* fun!" said Miss Creswick. "And when they ran after the robbers—oh! it was better than a scene in the theatre!"

Mr. Elleray sat silent and abstracted. It might do very well for the other young fellows to laugh and consider it a good joke. His dignity was touched. He felt that he had been outwitted—and by women, too!

"I'll never get up another gentlemen's pic-nic," said Mr. Elleray.

ONLY A CENT.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

"It was only a cent, you say?"

"Yes, 'm," said the old woman, meekly. "Only a cent. 'Tisn't the value of the money. I'd not have come for *that;* but when little Master Harry took it out of my till, you know, ma'am, it was a theft all the same as if it had been a dollar."

"Absurd," said Mrs. Rose. "The boy is only six years old. He's a mere baby. There's another cent. Of course I'm willing to give it to you."

"I don't want the cent," said the old woman, half crying. "What I want is to have him properly punished."

"You revengeful wretch!" said Mrs. Rose.

"'Taint revenge," said the woman. "It's love for the child. When my Ann was nursery-maid here I seen a heap of him, and I liked him so much, a pretty dear. Please *do*, ma'am, punish him and learn him not to steal. It's a mother's duty, ma'am. 'Tisn't only poor boys that grow up bad."

"This is unbearable," cried Mrs. Rose. "Punish that little fellow for picking up a cent. How did he know to whom it belonged. And *you*—a person like *you*—to talk to *me* of my duty. It is *too* preposterous."

"O do hear me, ma'am," said the old woman. "'Twasn't picking up a cent. I was in my back room and saw through the curtain. He came in tiptoe, watching and peeping, and he slipped around the counter and took the penny from the drawer. Then he knocks, and says he, when I comes: 'I want a cent's worth of lemon drops.' And I took it away and came to tell you; not for the value——"

"Take your cent and go," said Mrs. Rose. "After the presents I have sent you, and kind as I was to Ann—gave her her wedding dress and a set of china when she married—to go on so about a *paltry penny*. Bridget, open the door. I suppose that Mrs. Jones don't see it, I've requested her to go so often. And after this, Bridget, when I send you for trimmings, there is the new shop to go to. Quite a decent sort of person keeps it. I shall patronize her."

"It was just because of your kindness, ma'am, that I want Master Harry to be cured of being a thief," said the old woman. "'Twasn't innocent childishness. It was a sort o' a bad way as if theft was in him," said the old woman. "Can't you understand?"

"I understand you are impertinent," said Mrs. Rose. "Bridget, give that woman her precious cent, and lock the door after her. Here, Harry, pet, come to mamma. When Harry wants a cent, don't ask any one but dear papa and mamma."

And the young mother kissed her darling fondly.

He was a beautiful child, but not a frank looking one, and his mischief always developed itself in secret forays on the cake-box and preserve jars. To be sly was natural to him, and the servants knew this if his mother did not.

Of course he was not punished. Indeed he seemed to himself rather a hero than a culprit, and the next opportunity which offered to help himself to that which did not belong to him was seized upon with avidity.

He helped himself to knick-nacks in friends' houses, and to toys belonging to neighbors' children. If his mother forgot her purse upon her dressing-table, he rifled it of change.

Generally he contrived to conceal the depredations; and when discovered, friends feared to offend the indulgent parents, and contented themselves with putting portable property out of Master Harry's reach when they had the pleasure of a visit from that small but troublesome individual.

As for his mother, she thought the child "too cunning to scold," and only shook her head at him when ten cent pieces dropped from his jacket pockets, or his aunt's missing bracelet was found in his boot.

"Such things always wear off," she said. "Children outgrow them."

But they grew with Harry's growth and strengthened with his strength.

Had the first small sins been punished, had serious talk and reproof been administered, all might have been well; but the unhappy child, while his person was so daintily cared for and his comfort so fondly considered, he was morally as entirely left to himself as any little street beggar.

To be sure, Mrs. Rose taught him to pray; but she never explained to him what that nightly bending of the knee meant. To Harry it was a mere repetition of words.

She went to church, and would have been shocked had anyone suggested that she did not know the "Ten Commandments;" but she had never taught her boy that "Thou shalt not steal" was a divine command, either theoretically or practically.

She never did. And so Harry Rose grew up a handsome boy, educated and accomplished, but with no knowledge of his own failings. The family verdict was that Harry was perfect, and he agreed in it fully; and with this opinion went with the highest recommendations into the counting-house of X—— & W——.

Harry's father was not a rich man, and the boy's salary was sufficient to supply his wardrobe and furnish him with any proper recreation. But the boy had tastes which were expensive, and a disposition to dissipation. Always sly, he hid these things from his parents; but he could not manage without money. He had stolen from his parents at home; now in a position of confidence, he was enabled to rob his employers. He began with shillings and ended with a hundred dollars. There detection overtook him. The firm kindly forgave the boy, because of his youth and his parents' grief. Mr. Rose paid the money back, and Harry pretended penitence; and even now he was not reasoned with as a great sinner, but as one who had been very foolish.

"So young yet," said Mrs. Rose to her husband. "He really must have forgotten he had no right to it, and then he meant to put it back."

And soon Harry was in another situation.

The story of his crime had not been made public, and again he was trusted; and now he seemed trustworthy. Years went by, he grew to be a man and married. He was placed in the most confidential position in the house. Vast sums of money passed through his hands. He was respected, admired and beloved, not for a brief space of time but for ten long years. Then a man of thirty, with the responsibilities of father and husband. Harry Rose was one day missing from his place of business and from his home.

That he had been foully dealt with was the first belief of all who knew of his disappearance, and the excitement and sympathy was intense. But in a few days the truth was discovered. Harry Rose was a defaulter to an immense amount. He had committed a robbery, which stood almost alone in the annals of the history of crime. And this was only the climax to a course of deceit and depredation commenced with his first year in the establishment.

He escaped. His plans had been artfully laid, and the money was about his person.

Detectives were set upon his track in vain; and in a foreign land he lavished his ill-gotten wealth in riotous living, while his parents and his young wife suffered all the agonies of shame and grief, and his name was a disgrace to the son who had just learnt to lisp it.

But successful as he had been, Providence did not forget his crime. His riches took to themselves wings. He lost large sums at gambling tables and in bad company. He became poor; and still in terror of the arm of justice, and with a mind enfeebled by dissipation, he found it impossible to retrieve his fortunes. From the town where he had dwelt in luxury he wandered away almost a beggar, and in his middle life, for very want of bread, shipped as a common sailor on board a vessel which stood in need of hands.

In that vessel he found a Portuguese sailor—a wild fellow, without common prudence—who, putting a sailor's trust in every one, openly informed his mates that he had in a belt about his waist a large sum of money, which was to be given to his mother on his return home. He had great pride in the gift, and in the good opinion his family would have of him when he made it, and chattered of it frequently. Alas, the wretched man who listened was one to whom gold is a temptation not to be resisted.

He dreamt of that leather belt which held the treasure at night and thought of it all day. At last, as they lay in an American port, the fiend's whispers grew too strong for him. He lifted his grey head from his hammock and peeped into that of the Portuguese. There lay the black curls over the bronzed brow, and the great white teeth glittered in the open mouth, and the black lashes veiled the bright eyes.

He was sound asleep, and it would be so easy to unbuckle the belt; or to cut it off—that would be more quickly done.

And the old man let himself out of his hammock and crept to the side of the Portuguese. He drew his knife and cut away the portion of the belt where the money jingled, and had thrust it in his breast, when the young man awoke and grappled him.

The Portuguese was young, but unarmed and bewildered by the surprise of the moment, and that sharp knife was in the hand of Harry Rose.

"The money!—my mother's money—give it back!" cried the youth.

But Harry Rose could not give up the money. He lifted his knife and drove it into the poor fellow's breast and fled.

He found a boat and rowed himself to the shore, and set the boat adrift, and struck through the city streets seeking for a place to hide himself. But those on the ship had been alarmed. They found the Portuguese dead in his hammock, with his belt, his precious belt, of which he had talked so much, cut away, and the strange sailor missing. He was pursued and captured with the money about him, and blood stains on his clothes.

And in the city where he was born, and where yet his old, old mother dwelt, he met the fate of the murderer. And before he died he made full confession of all his crimes.

There are people who go to see men hung. Those who gratified that horrible curiosity that day heard the grey-haired man upon the gallows speak these words:

"I am about to die, and I die justly; but if there is a parent here I want to tell that parent that my father and mother who loved me so might have saved me from this awful and shameful end. I had the propensity to steal in me. Every one has some propensity to crime stronger than the rest; but I might have been cured.

"I began by stealing a cent from an old woman's toy-shop till. If I had been punished *then* I believe I never should have stolen again; but it was made light of, and I went on and here I am. But with my last breath I want to ask you all to watch your children, and no matter how slight a crime seems in one of them, to weed it out with all your strength, that it may not bring them to my end at last."

And then the black cap was put on, and Harry Rose looked on the world no more.

And his is not the only instance which warns us from what small beginnings great crimes spring.

The thief of only a cent may end in burglary or highway robbery; the lisper of a white lie may come to forget truth and honor utterly; and the little fist ready with baby blows, grown large and strong in manhood, may commit murder.

Weed your children's hearts even as you would your garden beds, or rank things will grow there apace and choke the flowers.

—The chief source of human discontent is to be looked for, not in real, but in our fictitious wants; not in the demand of nature, but in the artificial cravings of desire.

WIT AND HUMOR.

What He Did the First Year.—In one of the courts in Connecticut, recently, a woman was testifying on behalf of her son, and swore that he had worked on a farm ever since he was born. The lawyer who cross-examined her said: "You assert that your son has worked on a farm ever since he was born?" "I do." "What did he do the first year?" "He milked," she replied. The whole court laughed heartily, and the witness was questioned no further.

The Showman Outdone.—"Is the gorilla to be seen here?" "Yes, sir." "I want to see him." "Very well, sir." "It is fifty cents, isn't it?" "One dollar, sir. Fifty cents for *servants.*" "Well, I'm a servant." "You a servant!" "Yes, sir." "The d—l! Whose?" "*Yours,* sir—your humble servant." "Walk in and take a seat. The joke is worth the price of admission."

Business Stand.—A Frenchman, being about to remove his shop, his landlord inquired the reason, stating, at the same time, that it was considered a very good stand for business. The Frenchman replied, with a shrug of the shoulder, "Oh yes, he's very good *stand* for de business—by gar, me *stand* all day, for nobody come to make me *move!*"

Evading the Question.—"Shan't I see you hum from Singin'-skull to-night, Jerushy?" "No, you shan't do no such thing; I don't want you nor your company, Reuben." "P'raps you didn't exactly understand what I said?" "Yes, I did; you asked me if you mightn't see me hum." "W'y, no, I didn't; I only asked you *how your marm was!*"

Cure for Measles.—A lady having a couple of children sick with the measles, wrote to a friend for the best remedy, and by mistake received a recipe for making pickles, which, to her horror, she read as follows: "Scald them three or four times in very hot vinegar, and sprinkle them with salt, and, in a few days, they will be cured."

A bashful young man escorted an equally bashful young lady. As they approached the dwelling of the damsel she said entreatingly, "Zekial, don't tell anybody you beau'd me home." "Sary," said he emphatically, "don't you mind. I am as much ashamed of it as you are."

On one occasion Rufus Choate was defending a hard case when the judge made several rulings very much against the defendant, whereupon Mr. Choate blandly inquired: "May it please your Honor, who's engaged on the other side of this case beside the Judge?"

At a wooden wedding in Detroit a good joke was perpetrated by a would-be guest, who was unable to be present. He sent his regrets, written on a shingle, to the lady of the house. His appropriate hit caused much merriment.

"Do you mean to say that Smither's cured himself of a rattlesnake bite, by drinking three quarts of whiskey?" "Yes, I do; 'cause he never gave the least sign o' life after drinking the whiskey."

Speaking of the sudden death of a lady, in Vermont, an exchange says, in an apologetic manner, "No death having occurred in the family for more than twenty years, they were much affected."

A Legal Pun.—"Sir," said a man defending rather a notorious character, "I assure you it is pure innocence." "I quite agree with you," replied the other, "it is pure in-no-sense."

A man, while playing cards, fell off his chair in a fit. After half an hour's steady application of remedies, he recovered, and immediately inquired, "What are trumps?"

Our new acquisition, Walrussia, is so remote that it is unquestionably a "fur country," besides being ice-olated.

Why is a lady witness summoned to court like a vessel fastened to her dock?—Because she is bound to a pier.

"Doctor, what is a certain cure for a bald head?" "Amputation—decapitation—cutting it off, sir."

Why is a pine tree like the distance between Petersburg and Richmond?—Because it is not fir.

What are the best kind of agricultural *fairs?* Farmers' daughters.

One way of rising in the navy.—Being mast-headed.

CURRENT ITEMS.

An entire pic-nic party was lately poisoned, near Rome, Miss., by something accidentally mixed in the food. Seven of the party (ladies and gentlemen) and five servants had died, at last accounts, and twelve others were seriously ill. At first it was supposed that the illness arose from cholera, and the patients were treated accordingly; but the utter failure of the remedies lead to suspicions of poison, which, on examination, were confirmed.

A Pleasant Country to Live in.—The Jackson (Miss.) *Whig*, of a recent date, says: "On Friday morning, some 15 or 20 men, supposed to be from Henderson County, rode up to the house of Mr. Watt Moore, six miles north of Jackson, and opened fire on Mr. Moore and his brother. The Moore brothers, thus attacked, returned the fire, killing one of the assailants, and then fled for safety."

At a recent camp-meeting in Maryland, a young man of obtrusive irreligiousness had a photograph taken on the camp-ground of a young lady in a spiritual trance, and while gazing upon the picture, a sense of his unworthiness suddenly came upon him with overpowering force, and the result was his conversion that same day.

In the Southwest, especially in Mississippi, the horses and mules are dying off with a fatal disease, which first shows itself in small hard lumps on the animal's throat or breast, spreads rapidly over the body, and usually causes death in from six to eight hours, though occasionally the victim survives for an entire day.

The correspondents writing from the Indian country tell most extraordinory stories about wounded men lying still and feigning death while the savages take off their scalps, and of their then crawling into the lines of our army. In one case a man is said to have recovered his scalp and had it replaced by the surgeon.

A man was exhibiting a box of rattlesnakes on a Mississippi steamer, when one of the reptiles got at large on the deck, and made a great scampering among the passengers. A bull-dog on board attacked the snake and killed it, but was himself bitten by the reptile, and died in about ten minutes.

A respectable and promising young man, twenty-one years of age, who had been rather unsettled by coming into possession of a large property on attaining his majority, committed suicide at his uncle's house in Connecticut, a few days ago, while under the influence of liquor.

The savants have discovered a well near Sudbury, Vt., which baffles all their science and philosophy. The water freezes in it during the winter, and the ice thus formed remains all summer; while other wells in close proximity to this one exhibit no such phenomena.

The number of dead bodies floating in the North and East rivers seems to be on the increase lately, and they are almost always spoken of as being "unknown," and whether they were the victims of accident, murder, or suicide, no one can tell.

While a number of workmen were erecting a building to serve as an amphitheatre for the County Fair at New Florence, Mo., a tornado came tearing along and smashed the edifice, killing two men outright and injuring all the rest.

An infant about three months old was found the other morning on the porch of the church at the corner of Rutgers and Henry streets. No clue as to whence it came could be discovered, and it was taken charge of by the police.

A billiard-saloon keeper in Saratoga shot the assistant-keeper of the prison at Hudson City, N. J., a few days ago, because the latter, who had just arrived at the Springs in a state of semi-intoxication, behaved rudely to him.

Strange to say, the cholera is said to be driving people from the rural districts, in Illinois and Indiana, to the cities. Heretofore, people have fled before that dread visitant from the cities to the country.

In California, some of the Justices of the Peace have adopted the plan of holding religious services in their offices, on the Sabbath, where stated preaching is scarce and difficult to be got at.

Hermann Marxstein, a German farmer, living in Kansas, was attacked, while hoeing corn, by a grizzly bear, and torn so badly before his shrieks brought assistance, that he died in a few hours.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 1867.

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RECOLLECTIONS OF A BUSY LIFE.

By HORACE GREELEY.

No. VI.

ADIEU TO NEW-HAMPSHIRE.

Our tenancy of the "Beard farm," in Bedford, answered very nearly to my seventh and eighth years. That was a large and naturally good farm, but in a state of dilapidation, overgrown with bushes and briars, its fences in ruins, and the buildings barely able to stand alone—the large two-story house more especially far gone. My father had let his own farm, on shares, to a younger brother, whom he wished and hoped thus to serve, while he was led to expect payment for whatever improvements he should make on that which he had taken instead. He was disappointed every way; his health failed, and he was for nearly a year unable to work; his brother did not prosper on our place; while the promises which had lured us to the larger sphere of effort were not made good. To us children—by this time, four in number—the larger house and broader activities of the hired farm were a welcome exchange; but our fortunes, manifestly, waned there, and I think we were all soberly glad to return to our own snugger house and smaller farm, in the spring of 1820. As we were trying to work off a lee-shore, I believe neither of us boys went to school at all that summer, though I was but nine years old, and my brother not eight till June.

All in vain. The times were what is termed "hard"—that is, almost every one owed, and scarcely any one could pay. The rapid strides of British manufactures, impelled by the steam-engine, spinning-jenny, and power-loom, had utterly undermined the homely household fabrications whereof Londonderry was a prominent American focus; my mother still carded her wool and flax, spun her yarn, and wove her woolen, linen, and tow cloth; but they found no market at living prices; our hops sold for little more than the cost of bagging; and, in short, we were bankrupt. I presume my father had never been quite out of debt since he bought his place; but sickness, rash endorsements, (a family failing,) and bad luck generally, had swelled his indebtedness to something like $1,000,—which all we had in the world would not, at current prices, pay. In fact, I do not know how much property *would* have paid $1,000 in New-Hampshire in 1820, when almost every one was hopelessly involved, every third farm was in the sheriff's hands, and every poor man leaving for "the West" who could raise the money requisite for getting away. Every thing was cheap—dog-cheap—British goods especially so; yet, the comparatively rich were embarrassed, and the poor were often compulsorily idle and on the brink of famine. I have not been much of a Free-Trader ever since.

We had finished our summer tillage and our haying, when a very heavy rain set in, near the end of August. I think its second day was a Saturday; and still the rain poured till far into the night. Father was absent on business, but our mother gathered her little ones around her, and delighted us with stories and prospects of good things she purposed to do for us in the better days she hoped to see. Father did not return till after we children were fast asleep; and, when he did, it was with tidings that our ill-fortune was about to culminate. I guess that he was scarcely surprised, though we young ones ruefully were, when, about sunrise on Monday morning, the sheriff and sundry other officials, with two or three of our principal creditors, appeared, and—first formally demanding payment of their claims—proceeded to levy on farm, stock, implements, household stuff, and nearly all our worldly possessions but the clothes we stood in. There had been no writ issued till then—of course, no trial, no judgment—but it was a word and a blow in those days, and the blow first, in the matter of debt-collecting by legal process. Father left the premises directly, apprehending arrest and imprisonment, and was invisible all day; the rest of us repaired to a friendly neighbor's, and the work of levying went on in our absence. It were needless to add that all we had was swallowed up, and our debts not much lessened. Our farm, which had cost us $1,350, and which had been considerably improved in our hands, was appraised and set off to creditors at $500, out of which the legal costs were first deducted. A barn-full of rye, grown by us on another's land, whereof we owned an undivided half, was attached by a creditor, threshed out by day's work, and sold; the net result being an enlargement of our debt—the grain failing to meet all the costs. Thus, when night fell, we were as bankrupt a family as well could be.

We returned to our devastated house, and the rest of us staid there while father took a journey on foot westward, in quest of a new home. He stopped in the township of Hampton, Washington county, N. Y., and worked there two or three months with a Col. Parker French, who tilled a noble farm and kept tavern on the main road from Troy into western Vermont. He returned to us in due time, and, on the 1st of January, 1821, we all started in a hired two-horse sleigh, with the little worldly gear that was left us, for the township of Westhaven, Vermont, where father had hired, for $16 per annum, a small house, in which, after an intensely cold journey, we were installed three days later.

Let me revert for a little to our New Hampshire life, ere I bid it a final adieu.

I have already said that Amherst and Bedford are in the main poor towns, whose hard, rocky soil yields grudgingly, save of wood. Except in the villages, if even there, there were very few who could be called forehanded in my early boyhood. Poor as we were, no richer family lived within sight of our humble homestead, though our western prospect was only bounded by the "Chestnut Hills," two or three miles away. On the east, our range of vision was barred by the hill on the side of which we lived. The leading man of our neighborhood was Captain Nathan Barnes, a Revolutionary soldier and Calvinist deacon, after whom my brother was named, and who was a farmer of decided probity and sound judgment—worth, perhaps, $3,000. Though an ardent Federalist, as were a majority of his townsmen, he commanded a company of "exempts" raised to defend the country in case of British invasion during the war of 1812.

The Revolutionary War was not yet thirty years by-gone when I was born, and its passions, its prejudices, and its ballads, were still current throughout that intensely Whig region. When neighbors and neighbors' wives drew together at the house of one of their number, for an evening visit, there were often interspersed with "Cruel Barbara Allen" and other love-lorn ditties then in vogue, such reminiscences of the preceding age as "American Taxation," a screed of some fifty prosaic verses, opening thus:

"While I relate my story,
Americans, give ear;
Of Britain's fading glory
You presently shall hear.

I'll give a true relation,
(Attend to what I say.)
Concerning the taxation
Of North America."

The last throes of expiring loyalty are visible in this long-drawn ballad—Bute and North, and even Fox, being soundly berated for acts of tyranny whereof their royal master, George III., was sole author, and they but reluctant, hesitating, apprehensive instruments.

The ballads of the late war with Great Britain were not so popular in our immediate neighborhood, though my mother had good store of these also, and sang them with spirit and effect, along with "Boyne Water," "The taking of Quebec," by Wolfe, and even "Wearing of the Green," which, though dating from Ireland's '98, has been revived and adopted in our day with so vast and deserved an Irish popularity.

We were, in the truest sense, democrats, we Scotch-Irish Federalists from Londonderry, where Jefferson received but two votes in the memorable struggle of 1800. When, for a single year at the "Beard farm," our house echoed to the tread of a female "help," whose natural abilities were humble, and whose literary acquirements were inferior even to ours, that servant always ate with the family, even when we had the neighbors as "company;" and, though her wages were but fifty cents a week, she had her party, and invited the girls of the neighborhood to be her guests at tea, precisely as if she had been a daughter of the house. No where were manners ever simpler, or society freer from pretension or exclusiveness, than in those farmers' homes.

Hospitality was less bounteous and kinship less prized than in the days of the Scotch-Irish pioneers; but there was still much visiting of relatives and social enjoyment, especially in Winter, when hundreds returned to the old Londonderry hive from the younger swarms scattered all over the East, some of them beginning to stretch away even to the far "Holland Purchase," in Western New York, then practically as distant as Oregon or Walrussia now is. I remember when the Doles left the "Chestnut Hills" to pitch their tent in Illinois—then a far bolder venture than migration to Sitka would now be. I have often seen my grandfather Woodburn's house crammed for days with cousins and nephews from Vermont and other 'Derry settlements, who could not be so many as to miss a hearty welcome. Our house was far smaller, and less frequented; but its latch-string was always out; and a free liver, with twelve brothers and sisters, to say nothing of their partners by marriage and their children, is not apt to be persistently shunned. In fact, we lived better than we could afford to, (as poor folks are too apt to do,) and this was one cause of our downfall. My father, as proud as he was poor, spared nothing when friends and relatives, especially those of higher social standing, favored him with their company, and was rarely found unable to fulfill their most sanguine expectations. When too many dropped in upon us at once, or we were found deficient in the luxuries they might fairly expect, he had a habit of telling them this anecdote:

"When I was a boy of fifteen," said he, "I worked two summers in the great brick-yards of Medford, Mass. My employer, Mr. Marshall, was at first a new man in the community, whose wife deemed it incumbent on her to give her neighbors a tea-party, as a prelude to better acquaintance. In those ante-canal days, wheaten flour was a luxury, though nearly all had it for 'company' occasions; ordinarily, our bread was made of 'rye and Indian' exclusively. Mrs. Marshall, on the great occasion, had the inevitable 'short-cake' for tea—of rye flour, as all could perceive; still, it was not imperative on common folks to proffer cake of wheaten flour; and all would have passed off without remark, and been soon forgotten, but for a maladroit explanation by the hostess. 'Ladies,' said she to her guests, 'I beg you not to infer that we have no wheat flour, from the fact that I give you rye short-cake. We *have* wheat flour in the house; but I thought I would save that for Mr. Marshall, when he comes to work hard in haying-time.'" The astonished guests tittered; the glee broadened into a laugh, as the explanation galloped through the neighborhood; and it readily passed into a proverb that any thing deficient on a kindred occasion was saved for Mr. Marshall, in haying-time. "Friends," added my father, in conclusion, "if you note any thing deficient in our fare, consider that it is saved for Mr. Marshall, in haying-time."

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THE "COMPANY" SWINDLE.

"The air hath bubbles as the water has," quoth Banquo. Had Shakespeare lived in these "incorporating" times, he would probably have put into that unfortunate gentleman's mouth some apt allusion to the bubbles of the stock market. But the mystery of iniquity called "getting up a company" was comparatively unknown in the reign of the Spinster Queen, and moreover, as we learn from a subsequent remark of that "bold operator," Macbeth, Banquo had no *speculation* in his eyes. The "South Sea Bubble" swelled, glittered and burst long after the "Swan of Avon" had ceased to sing, and that magnificent bag of wind may be considered the grand exemplar of all the financial capsules that have since expanded and exploded in various parts of the world, Wall street included.

The histories of these ephemera are so much alike, that the story of the origin, decline and collapse of any one of them may be said to describe the career of the entire genus. A few sharps of the market, well up in the trickery of finance, agree to "get up a company." The understanding is that they shall play into each other's hands and upon the public. The nature of the "enterprise" proposed to be carried out is of little consequence, provided it be tolerably plausible. The first thing to be done is to advertise it, for everything depends upon the style in which it is glorified through the press. Elaborate statistics are indispensable; for the absurd proverb that "figures cannot lie" is one of the watch-words of this credulous age. Only ten per cent: of the nominal capital is required to be paid in, and the directors are confident that no further call will be necessary. The trumpet of the company is skilfully blown. Subscriptions pour in. The shares are at a handsome premium. But "don't sell," say the founders of the company. "Keep your shares. There is no such investment in the market. The dividends will be enormous." Meantime, these disinterested advisers seize time by the forelock, and dispose of their stock in a quiet way. Then comes a call upon the shareholders for a new installment of ten per cent., then another, another, and another, and with every fresh demand the stock goes down, down, down, until the shares are scarcely worth the paper that represent them. The concern goes into liquidation—but there are no assets. The Bubble has exploded, and the Bubble blowers are already casting about to find the materials for a new one.

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CHEERFUL SUNDAYS.

I can never tell why country clergymen do not shut up their churches in summer, and selecting some lovely grove, there *talk*, not "preach," to their people. Where could be the harm of letting "the Jews" and the "doctrines" alone till cold weather? and giving now and then a natural "burst" born of the woods, and hills, and streams? Every summer how I long, as I travel about, and these lovely calm sweet Sabbaths dawn upon us, to have an *out-of-door church*. Nor would it distress my sanctity to see the little children rambling round us—now listening to catch a word, now straying off to pluck a flower, now spell-bound by the sweet hymn, as the leaves whisper to each other, "Glory to God in the highest; peace on earth and good will to men." No admonishing hand should be laid by me on their little shoulders with the petrifying announcement, so impossible for young childhood to understand, "You must not *run*—it is Sunday." "You must not *play*—it is Sunday." "You must not *laugh*—it is Sunday."

How *can* a little child, of four or five years, keep from "laughing" because it is Sunday? How *can* he keep his little busy, restless hands folded while birds are singing and leaves are dancing, and the brooks are sparkling in the sunlight, and earth is as fair as his own sweet, happy face.

Oh, *don't* make him hate Sunday by this mistaken method of teaching him to keep it holy. *Don't* begin so early to make him a little hypocrite. You will soon find in his pocket strings and balls, and pins, and dead bugs, and every other surreptitious contrivance to relieve the horrid tedium of *such* a "Sunday." Do *you* never, my good sir or madam, get up later and go to bed earlier on that day than any other? Do *you* never sleep away its noonday hours because your mind gets weary with prolonged reading? Do you never, under the disguise of a ride, or a beautiful Sunday, think it best to go to a more distant church than your own chosen one to hear preaching? Do *you*, who exact of your restless child such motionless propriety in these hours, never stray off *yourself* to discuss warm political questions, or vexed business matters, with your next neighbor? Look closely into these points before settling your children's programme for the Sabbath hours.

Should not the Sabbath be "a delight?" and is this the way to make it so? Will there not come to children so managed a terrible rebound of license and lawlessness when they are out of leading strings? *I* think so; and it is because I think so, because I have so often seen it, that I beg these well-meaning but mistaken parents to consider a little if what I say may not be true. Any thing seems to me preferable to this compulsory Sabbatism of young childhood. Any thing better than hearing a little child so brought up say sorrowfully, "oh, dear, it is Sunday again." Oh, put down that Scott's Commentary you are already half asleep over, and take that disgusted, weary little child by the hand, and walk out into the fields with it, and show it God's wonderful workmanship in the varieties of trees, leaves and flowers. Do you call that "wicked?" I tell you it is much more wicked to make a sanctimonious hypocrite of a little creature, whose heart is so bursting with love and glee that you might as well try to stop the birds from singing till Monday as to repress its utterance because "it is Sunday."

Sunday? why, on Sunday throw open all the blinds instead of closing them, as if joy lay coffined and shrouded within, as truly it often does with these mistaken people. Sunday? why, on every mantel and table lay bright odorous flowers. Sunday? always have something very nice for the little palate to mark the day; prepared on Saturday if you choose, but *have it*. Sunday? why, give your children twenty kisses on that day over and above every other day in the week. Look more smiling on that day. Speak more cheerfully. Devote yourself to *happifying* your house and your children instead of groaning over "Doddridge's Rise and Progress," and calling yourself "a miserable sinner," as indeed you are! Try to mend matters, if you are sincere, by *active* "piety" such as this. Let your children look back from a serene old age upon happy—*happy* Sundays; instead of feeling even at that late day, when its light dawns upon them, an impulse to escape its rigidity and tedium. It is *because* I love the day and its sweet calm hours that I ask this. It is *because* I want those children to have this *home anchor* to keep them from straying into the paths of lawlessness and license in *after years*. *It is because God is love that I dread your teaching your children to run away from him instead of into his open arms.* FANNY FERN.

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The Coming Season—Bright Prospects Ahead.

The country begins to look autumnal. The second crop of clover—a tremendous one—is ripe for the scythe, and the bees, with a song like the murmur of happy infancy, are drawing honey from the crimson blooms. The crack of fowling-pieces is heard in the woods and stubble fields; the flossy tassels of the corn have lost their silken sheen; the clustered bubbles of the vine are crimsoning and purpling; velvet-cheeked peaches, flushed by the kisses of the sun, drop heavy with sweetness from the boughs; apples, splashed with gold and vermillion, and amber-varnished pears, gleam among the orchard boughs; the door-yard maples are tinged here and there with scarlet and sapphire; flocks of yellow butterflies flutter by the roadside; the birds, renouncing for the time being their marital and parental ties, have turned communists; the sky is of a milder blue, the grass of a deeper green than during the summer solstice,—and by all these signs and tokens we know, without looking at the almanac, that September has come.

With the close of the dog days the city awakes from its summer drowse and girds its loins for the fall campaign. Absentees are already dropping in, and by the end of the month the country bivouacs of our pleasure-seekers will be broken up, and the voice of traffic, which is comparatively but a whisper in July and August, will have swelled to a mighty roar. Heaven has furnished the basis of a brisk business season in the shape of a most abundant harvest, and if the mercantile community will only be content to move steadily ahead on the solid turnpike of trade, instead of trying to cleave the clouds on the waxen pinions of speculation, a career of unexampled prosperity is before us.

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[From the (Philadelphia) Methodist Home Journal.]

We tried to set ourselves against Mr. BEECHER and his great story in the *New York Ledger*, but candidly we cannot help falling in line with the Editorial Corps, who have set the seal of their approval and admiration on such a creation of genius as "Norwood." To us, in common with the million, it is "a thing of beauty"—exquisite in delineation, elevating in sentiment, and, so far at least, orthodox in theology. We have some choice passages marked for our columns.

LA FAYETTE IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

BY JAMES PARTON.

In the year 1730, there appeared in Paris a little volume entitled, "Philosophic Letters," which proved to be one of the most influential books produced in modern times.

It was written by Voltaire, who was then thirty-six years of age, and contained the results of his observations upon the English nation, in which he had resided for two years. Paris was then as far from London, for all practicable purposes, as New York now is from Calcutta; so that when Voltaire told his countrymen of the freedom that prevailed in England; of the tolerance given to the religious sects; of the honors paid to untitled merit; of Newton, buried in Westminster Abbey with almost regal pomp; of Addison, Secretary of State, and Swift, familiar with prime ministers; and of the general liberty, happiness and abundance of the kingdom; France listened in wonder as to a new revelation. The work was, of course, immediately placed under the ban by the French Government and the author exiled, which only gave it increased currency and deeper influence.

This was the beginning of the movement which produced, at length, the French Revolution of 1787, and which will continue until France is blessed with a free and constitutional government. It began in the higher classes of the people, for at that day not more than one-third of the French could read at all, and a much smaller fraction could read such a work as the "Philosophic Letters" and the books which it called forth. Republicanism was fashionable in the chateaux and drawing-rooms of Paris for many years before the mass of the people knew what the word meant.

Among the young noblemen who were early smitten in the midst of a despotism with the love of liberty was the Marquis de La Fayette, born in 1757. Few families in Europe could boast a greater antiquity than his. A century before the discovery of America, we find the La Fayettes spoken of as an "ancient house;" and in every generation, at least, one member of the family had distinguished himself by his services to his king. This young man, coming upon the stage of life when republican ideas were teeming in every cultivated mind, embraced them with all the ardor of youth and intelligence. At sixteen he refused a high post in the household of one of the princes of the blood, and accepted a commission in the army. At the age of seventeen he was married to the daughter of a duke, whose dowry added a considerable fortune to his own ample possessions. She was an exceedingly lovely woman, and tenderly attached to her husband, and he was as fond of her as such a boy could be.

The American Revolution broke out. In common with all the high-born republicans of his time, his heart warmly espoused the cause of the revolted colonies, and he immediately conceived the project of going to America and fighting under her banner. He was scarcely nineteen years of age when he sought a secret interview with Silas Deane, the American envoy, and offered his services to the Congress. Mr. Deane, it appears, objected to his youth.

"When," says he, "I presented to the envoy my boyish face, I spoke more of my ardor in the cause than of my experience; but I dwelt much upon the effect my departure would excite in France, and he signed our mutual agreement."

His intention was concealed from his family and from all his friends, except two or three confidants. While he was making preparations for his departure, most distressing and alarming news came from America—the retreat from Long Island, the loss of New York, the battle of White Plains, and the retreat through New Jersey. The American forces, it was said, reduced to a disheartened band of three thousand militia, were pursued by a triumphant army of thirty-three thousand English and Hessians. The credit of the colonies at Paris sunk to the lowest ebb, and some of the Americans themselves confessed to La Fayette that they were discouraged, and persuaded him to abandon his project. He said to Mr. Deane:

"Until now, sir, you have only seen my ardor in your cause, and that may not prove at present wholly useless. I shall purchase a ship to carry out your officers. We must feel confidence in the future; and it is especially in the hour of danger that I wish to share your fortune."

He proceeded at once with all possible secresy to raise the money and to purchase and arm a ship. While the ship was getting ready, in order the better to conceal his intention, he made a journey to England, which had previously been arranged by his family. He was presented to the British king, against whom he was going to fight; he danced at the house of the minister who had the department of the colonies; he visited Lord Rawdon, afterwards distinguished in the Revolutionary struggle; and he saw at the opera Sir Henry Clinton, whom he next saw on the battle field of Monmouth; he breakfasted with Lord Shelbourne, a friend of the colonies.

"While I concealed my intentions," he tells us, "I openly avowed my sentiments. I often defended the Americans. I rejoiced at their success at Trenton; and it was my spirit of opposition that obtained for me an invitation to breakfast with Lord Shelbourne."

On his return to France his project was discovered and his departure forbidden by the king. He sailed, however, in May, 1777, cheered by his countrymen, and secretly approved by the government itself. On arriving at Philadelphia, he sent to Congress a remarkably brief epistle to the following effect:

"After my sacrifices, I have the right to ask two favors: one is, to serve at my own expense; the other, to begin to serve as a volunteer."

Congress immediately named him a major-general of the American army, and he at once reported himself to General Washington. His services at the Brandywine, where he was badly wounded; in Virginia, where he held an important command; at Monmouth, where he led the attack; are sufficiently well known. When he had been in America about fifteen months, the news came of the impending declaration of war between France and England. He then wrote to Congress that, so long as he had believed himself free, he had gladly fought under the American flag; but that his own country being at war, he owed to it the homage of his services, and he desired their permission to return home. He hoped, however, to come back to America; and assured them that, wherever he went, he should be a zealous friend of the United States. Congress gave him leave of absence, voted him a sword, and wrote a letter on his behalf to the King of France.

"We recommend this noble young man," said the letter of Congress, "to the favor of your Majesty, because we have seen him wise in council, brave in battle, and patient under the fatigues of war."

He was received in France with great distinction, which he amusingly describes:

"When I went to court, which had hitherto only written for me orders for my arrest, I was presented to the ministers. I was interrogated, complimented, and exiled—to the hotel where my wife was residing. Some days after I wrote to the king to acknowledge *my fault*. I received in reply a light reprimand and the coloneley of the Royal Dragoons. Consulted by all the ministers, and, what was much better, embraced by all the women, I had at Versailles the favor of the king, and celebrity at Paris."

In the midst of his popularity he thought always of America, and often wished that the cost of the banquets bestowed upon him could be poured into the treasury of Congress. His favorite project at that time was the invasion of England—Paul Jones to command the fleet and himself the army. When this scheme was given up he joined all his influence to that of Franklin to induce the French government to send to America a powerful fleet and a considerable army. When he had secured the promise of this valuable aid, he returned to America and served again in the armies of the young republic. The success of the United States so confirmed him in his attachment to republican institutions, that he remained their devoted adherent and advocate as long as he lived.

"May this revolution," said he once to Congress, "serve as a lesson to oppressors, and as an example to the oppressed."

And in one of his letters from the United States occurs this sentence:

"I have always thought that a king was at least a useless being; viewed from this side of the ocean, a king cuts a poor figure indeed."

By the time he had left America, at the close of the war, he had expended in the service of Congress seven hundred thousand francs—a free gift to the cause of liberty.

One of the most pleasing circumstances of La Fayette's residence in America was the affectionate friendship which existed between himself and General Washington. He looked up to Washington as to a father as well as a chief, and Washington regarded him with a tenderness truly paternal. La Fayette named his eldest son George Washington, and never omitted any opportunity to testify his love and veneration for the illustrious American. Franklin, too, was much attached to the youthful enthusiast, and privately wrote to General Washington asking him, for the sake of the young and anxious wife of the Marquis, not to expose his life except in an important and decisive engagement.

In the diary of the celebrated William Wilberforce, who visited Paris soon after the peace, there is an interesting passage descriptive of La Fayette's demeanor at the French court:

"He seemed to be the representative of the democracy in the very presence of the monarch—the tribune intruding with his veto within the chamber of the patrician order. His own establishment was formed upon the English model, and, amidst the gayety and ease of Fontainbleau, he assumed an air of republican austerity. When the fine ladies of the court would attempt to drag him to the card-table, he shrugged his shoulders with an air of affected contempt for the customs and amusements of the old *regime*. Meanwhile, the deference which this champion of the new state of things received, above all from the ladies of the court, intimated clearly the disturbance of the social atmosphere, and presaged the coming tempest."

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THE ENNOBLEMENT OF LABOR.

Two hundred years ago nobody thought of conceding anything like dignity to physical labor, and the toilers of the world had but few acknowledged rights. In England, as late as 1813, the wages, the hours of labor, and even the meal times of journeymen mechanics were regulated by law, and employers who paid their workmen more than the legal stipend were liable to be fined. But the laboring millions have made a mighty stride since then. Here and in Great Britain skilled industry in every branch of useful art frequently takes issue with capital on the question of wages, and as often as not wins the day. The working classes of the United States understand and apply the fable of the "Bundle of Sticks." The political system under which they live teaches them the value of union, and their protective organizations are formidable bodies, to whose "moral suasion" "Associated Capital" finds it expedient to listen respectfully. When any one of these organizations "strikes" for a higher rate of remuneration, Capital either yields gracefully in the beginning, or makes a compromise, or fights it out to the bitter end. In the latter case, the combined long purses almost always get the best of the combined short ones, and the malcontents eventually fall back into their old places at the old rates. There ought not, however, to be any quarrels between capital and labor. Their interests are identical, and in this country not only *one*, but *indivisible*. On the other side of the Atlantic capital begets capital, but here labor begets it too. Mechanics may become millionaires and porters merchant princes; and such are the advantages offered to labor in this market that the intelligent, prudent and energetic toiler is bound to rise, and as he rises to be honored. In Europe the different classes of society simply repeat themselves. When a member of a subordinate class makes his way into the charmed circle of the aristocracy, it is regarded as an innovation. Families with "coat armor" look with sublime contempt on beings who have conquered fortune in their shirt sleeves. In the lands *infested* with "privileged orders" the fabric of society is always pretty much the same. Each portion of the structure is renewed from generation to generation with one kind of material. With us it is otherwise. Our social fabric is a piece of mosaic, and the process of tesselation is continually going on. Side by side with a bit of porcelain we place a chunk of serviceable delf, and the other day we variegated the edifice, rather extensively, with ebony. Ancestors count for nothing with us. We judge of men by what they do, and rate them accordingly. If any man is "noble" in this country, it is the *self-elevated worker*.

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Marriage as a Life-Preserver.

A certain set of philosophers, incapable of feeling affection for any one but themselves, have delighted in sneering at love and marriage, and have argued that bachelorhood is the only conservative state. But their theory is not borne out by the statistics of married and single life in modern times, so far at least as the masculine gender is concerned. If longevity is desirable, then it is better that we should marry than remain bachelors; for it appears that, at every age, from 20 to 85, the death-rate of the Benedicts is very much smaller than that of their unmated brethren. Gentlemen who prefer a short life and a merry one to a prolonged lease of matrimonial placidity, will probably agree in opinion with the cynical philosophers, while less mercurial Christians will differ from them. Tastes vary, and every man has a moral right to take his choice between single and double-blessedness; always provided that he has not committed himself by a direct promise to make some fair being his wife. He should keep his word at whatever cost to his feelings.

◆

Our Friends the Muscovites.

The Russian ladies, we are told, almost cover themselves with diamonds and pearls, and affect the most dazzling colors in their dress, the favorite hues being crimson, saffron, violet, pink and green. But the uniforms of the officers of the Russian army outglitter even the *toilettes* of the female noblesse. Gold seems to have been spread over them in handfuls—the value of the precious metal on a single costume varying from six hundred dollars to thousands.

In Saint Petersburgh society seems to have but two phases—magnificence and squalor. Next door to the palace stands the hovel. Luxury and Misery rub shoulders everywhere, and Notables and Nobodies, equally drunk, go reeling through the streets at all hours of the day.

GOOD-BYE TO THE SWALLOWS.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

What are the house-martins talking about,
All through this long August morning;
What does the open-mouthed orator say—
Is he preaching, or coaxing, or warning?

Ah, now I remember, the cause of it all,
It is time for the birds to be flying;
Some are not ready, others won't wait,
And this is the cause of such crying.

Mr. Fleetwing declares there is plenty of time,
That the fogies all needlessly worry,
Forgetting that he can fly faster than they,
And so never feels in a hurry.

But old Mother Martin (from dining on flies)
Has grown most alarmingly fatter;
No wonder that she is in haste to be off,
Or keeps up a garrulous chatter.

Miss Bright-Eyes is begging her mother to stay,
In spite of that wise woman's preaching;
"For, ma, only think, at twilight each night,
Mr. Fleetwing 'the German' is teaching."

Mother Martin looks grave, calls the Dominie in,
Confiding to him her distraction;
He talks a great deal, but all his remarks
Seem to give her but small satisfaction.

He would like to be off, his sermons are through,
But would do for a new congregation;
His coat rather rusty is growing the while,
Scarcely fitting a bird in his station.

Lawyer Coke is delighted as sundry disputes
Toward close litigation are tending,
And Swallowdom's safe reconstruction shall give
Good causes for contests unending.

Lady Fine-Feather grieves to abandon her home,
For fear her young swallows will wander;
Too faithless to trust in the care of the Lord,
Who can keep them in safety tho' yonder.

Thus through the bright air of the morning I hear
And translate what these busy ones utter;
And watch them arranging their order of march,
With chatter, and skirmish, and flutter.

* * * * * *

They have gone. In the blue of the far-away sky,
They have wavered and faded. Good-morrow.
Good-by, little swallows, good-by for a year,
A year, with its possible sorrow.

You will come with your cheery and musical note;
Shall I see you? Perchance to all seeming
The same outer "I" shall be still in the spot,
In the same busy idleness dreaming.

But a soul older grown some roses must lose,
Some wheat from the summer-time treasure;
And souls like our faces grow lined as we live,
Time treading, on both leaves his measure.

Good-by, little swallows, God knows if we meet,
Or what chances shall keep us asunder;
But if in the window you see me no more,
Little birds, will you miss me, I wonder?

WINNING HER WAY.

By MRS. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "BRITOMARTE, THE MAN-HATER," "SELF-MADE," "THE HIDDEN HAND," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER LXXX.

LITTLE LENNY'S ADVENTURES.

Oh! 'tis a peerless boy,
Fearless, ingenuous, courteous, capable;
He's all the mother's, from the top to toe.
SHAKESPEARE.

Was little Lenny frightened when he woke up and found himself in that strange and wretched garret, closely surrounded by new and terrible faces?

Not at all. Neither by nature nor by training was the baby-boy a coward. The child of many generations of heroes had inherited no craven fears; the cherished darling of the household had been taught none.

In a *word*, *he* was a plucky little fellow, afraid of neither man, beast nor devil.

And there was still another reason why on this occasion he was not afraid. For if, as it has been written by the prince of poets, "*music* hath charms to soothe the savage breast," how much more hath beautiful and gracious childhood?

The wretched men and women, gathered around this pretty boy, looked on him, not with ferocious faces, but with smiles; and not with the deceitful smiles whose insincerity a child will detect much more quickly than an adult can, but real, heartfelt smiles, called up by seeing among them "something better than they had known."

Yes, even while they were wresting from him his little treasures of finery and jewelry, they did it with an expression of eagerness rather than of ferocity.

And little Lenny gazed on them, turning his blue eyes from one to another, not in fear, but in wonder and in curiosity. Sometimes he was so much amused by their excitement that he laughed aloud.

But he was as a little prince, king, or god among these poor creatures, and he knew it. For when Red Roger unclasped and snatched his elegant pearl and turquoise necklace from his neck, he suddenly put out his chubby hand and snatched it back—so suddenly and unexpectedly that he actually gained possession of it again before the slow and lumbering brute could prevent him. And after he did so he fixed his eyes indignantly upon the thief, and said:

"Man! how dare you tate 'hings 'out leave?"

And it was delicious to see the air of authority and confidence with which the baby-boy put this question.

And why not? Had he not been permitted to rule over his mother and cousins, and even over his godfather, the veteran general, who was the greatest man *he* knew in the world? and should he not rule over these poor creatures? And besides, I think that Master Leonard Lyon, while inheriting all the graces and virtues of his ancient house, inherited some of its faults as well, and among the latter that inordinate pride of caste which is so very objectionable in this Republican age, and that he looked upon this order of human creatures as rather lower in the scale of being than well-bred cattle. So, captive and helpless as he was, he looked around upon them with queerly mixed feelings of wonder, mirth, pity and disapprobation, but without a particle of fear.

As for the red-haired ruffian, he was so astonished by the words and actions of the baby-boy, that he could but open his mouth and eyes and stare. He did not attempt to recover the necklace; but of course he knew that the child and his jewels were both in his power all the same.

Lenny, after staring at him for a moment and receiving no answer to his unanswerable question, turned to the gipsy-looking girl and asked:

"What you name, dirl?"

"Meg," answered the girl, smiling kindly on the child.

"Met, you tate dis and teep it for Lenny. *Me* name Lenny," he said, handing her the necklace.

Meg looked up in doubt and fear to the face of her red-haired relative, and meeting his eye, and seeing him nod and wink at her, she slipped the necklace into her bosom and answered the child, calling herself by the name he had given her:

"Yes, pretty! Met will keep it for Lenny. (Yes, and I will, too, if I can,") she added, in a lower tone. But she probably knew also that the jewels must pass back into the custody of the red-haired ruffian before the night should be over.

But Lenny's attention was instantly called away to another quarter. In fact, he needed to be constantly on the alert to prevent himself from being stripped and skinned by the thieves.

"You 'top, *man!*" he indignantly exclaimed to Black Bill, who was stealing the pearl and turquoise armlets from his sleeve. "Div Lenny back, minute!" he cried, making a snatch at the jewels.

Black Bill probably felt safe in relinquishing his prizes, for the time being; for as soon as he restored them to Lenny, the child passed them over to the appointed keeper of the jewels, saying:

"Met, teep dem too for Lenny."

And the girl, with a smile, put them also in her bosom.

But presently this chosen servant seemed turning traitor to her little lord, for while his attention was for a moment called off elsewhere, he felt hands at work upon his pretty little blue kid gaiters, with their gold buttons.

"'Top dat, *Met!* 'Top it, *Met!* What you pull off my hoos for? Me not do bed. 'Top it, *Met!*" he cried, this time less in anger than in anguish to see such treachery in a trusted servant.

"Oh! I want 'em so bad! so bad! Won't you give 'em to me? Won't Lenny give 'em to Met?" pleaded the girl, in a wheedling tone.

"You want my hoos?" inquired Lenny, pitifully.

"Yes, so bad! I have got no shoes."

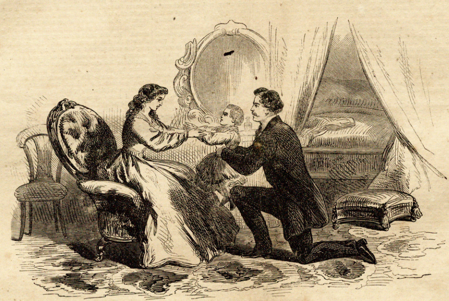
"You dot no hoos?"

"No."

"Well, den, me div you mine. Tate off! tate off! Me dot more hoos home."

The girl took them off. And this must be said in excuse for her, that she was acting under the orders and under the eyes of her tyrannical and unscrupulous uncles.

"Now put on *you* feet! Put on! put on!" insisted Lenny, stooping over and looking at Meg's sturdy naked limbs. "But my hoos too ittle for you feet. You feet so bid!" he added, in astonishment, at the size of Meg's "understanding."



DRUSILLA'S DREAM.

"Never mind, I can change 'em for a bigger pair," answered the girl.

Before Lenny could reply again, he was accosted by the beldam, who held him on her lap and who had got possession of his elegant little white satin hat, with its plume of white marabout feathers fastened with a cluster of diamonds.

"And may I have this, my pretty, pretty bird?" she asked, holding it up to view.

"You dot no bonnet?" he inquired, compassionately.

"No, my pretty little angel, I've got no bonnet."

"Den you have Lenny hat—Doosa div Lenny more hat. Put on, put on!" he exclaimed, impatiently seizing his beautiful and costly cap, and trying to decorate with it the horrible head of the old hag.

He was permitted to complete his purpose, to the unbounded mirth of the group, who all burst into loud laughter at the ludicrous effect produced.

When this ebullition had somewhat subsided, Lenny bestowed his sash upon Meg, his tiny pocket-handkerchief on one man, and his little gloves on another; and then he said, with an air of relief:

"Now, dat all—Lenny dot no more div! Now Lenny want do home see Doosa."

He said this with so much confidence, yet with so much uneasiness and longing that they all pitied him. The old woman asked:

"Who is Doosa, my little angel?"

"Doosa id Doosa—Lenny Doosa—Lenny pretty Mamma Doosa."

"His mother," said one of the men, in a low voice.

And then, for a few moments, nobody knew what to say.

Lenny was the first to speak:

"Tate me home now see Doosa. Met, I do 'id you—you tate me."

Meg was confounded for a few moments, and then her mother-wit came to her aid, and she answered:

"But Doosa is coming here herself to take Lenny home."

"Doosa tome here, tate Lenny home?"

"Yes, and Lenny must be a good boy till Doosa comes."

"Doosa say so?"

"Yes, Doosa say so."

"Den Lenny will——" he said, gaping, and adding:

"Lenny so seepy! me so seepy!"

"Well, then, lay on its old grannam breast, and go to sleep, my little angel," said the old woman, gathering him up to her bosom.

"No, no, no, no! lay on Met lap. Met dit Lenny seep," he said, wriggling himself away from the crone, and going up to Meg.

What girl does not doat on little children? What girl, under these circumstances, would not have met the baby's advances with delight?

The poor young daughter of thieves and beggars took the child up in her arms and looked around for a seat.

"Well, then, if you have got to nurse him, I will give you my chair," said the old woman, rising and throwing herself down upon the bed.

Meg took the seat, and arranged the drowsy child comfortably on her lap.

"Wock me! wock me, Met!" said little Lenny.

There were no rockers on the ricketty chair, but Meg moved her body backwards and forwards, and so gave the baby the best rocking she could.

"Now sin' to me, Met."

Meg looked perplexed at this request, for a moment, but soon recovered herself. Fortunately, Mother Goose's melodies are the common property of infant humanity, from the royal palace to the rag-picker's hut, and Meg struck up the nursery-classic—

"By, Baby-Bunting!"

She had a very sweet voice, which certainly soothed the child, for he listened in drowsy delight. He well understood that he himself was the Baby-Bunting in question. But when she sang the next line:

"Popper 's gone a-hunting,"

He opened his sleepy eyes, and said:

"No, no; me dot no popper!"

"Never mind; some Baby-Buntings have—

"Mommer 's gone a-milking."

"No, no; Lenny mammer don't go miltin'! *Dane* do miltin, and *Mawy*, and *Suzy*—down home in tountry. And Lenny do wid 'em too—see milt tow," he exclaimed, quite waking up, as the memory of the rural pleasures of Old Lyon Hall flashed over his mind.

"Well, never mind; some mommers do, you know—

"Sister 's gone a-silking."

"Lenny aint dot no sister—not one," he said.

"Brother 's gone to get a skin
To wrap my Baby-Bunting in—
A pretty little rabbit-skin,
To wrap my Baby-Bunting in."

"No, no, no; Lenny ain't dot no brudder. *Dit* do after yabbits," said Lenny, very drowsily.

He was almost asleep, and the girl continued her chanting; but presently, as his eyes were about closing, he suddenly started up:

"Met?"

"What does my pretty want?"

"When Doosa tomes, wate me up."

"Yes, that I will."

"Dood night, Met!"

"Good night, little angel!"

"Tiss me first, Met; tiss Lenny dood-night, Met!"

The girl stooped and kissed the child almost passionately, and murmured:

"Who could hurt him, the darling?"

But Lenny's eyelids were weighed down with sleep, and he was almost gone again, when, once more he called:

"Met, I fordot to say my p'ayers. Hear me say my p'ayers, Met?"

And, heavy with sleep as he was, he slipped off her lap, knelt down at her knee, and folded his little hands, and bowed his little head, and opened his baby-mouth, in "the simplest form of words that infant-lips can try:"

"Now I 'ay me down to s'eep,
P'ay de Lord my soul to teep;
If I die before I wate,
P'ay de Lord my soul to tate."

This was the little evening prayer that had been taught him, with much trouble, by his mother.

It was uttered now in a place and among people who had probably never heard a prayer before.

Yet, perhaps, no purer orisons from priest or prelate arose to the throne of the Most High that night.

"Now me done. Now me do seep," said Lenny, drowsily, climbing up to Meg's lap and putting his arms around her neck and nestling his head upon her bosom.

"Bless the darling!" said the girl, as she gathered him closer and supported him comfortably.

And again he was almost asleep, when again he started up and called out:

"Met!"

"What is it now, my pretty?"

"Don't you fordet to wate me up when mamma Doosa, tomes."

"No, I won't, my pretty."

"Now I do seep, sure 'nough. Dood night, Met."

"Good night, little angel."

"More tiss."

She stooped and pressed her lips to his baby lips again.

He opened his drowsy eyes to look at her and say:

"Lenny love Met." And with the words in his mouth he fell fast asleep.

And Meg continued to rock him with a gentle motion and sing to him in a soothing tone.

Meanwhile the old woman lay resting on her bed, and the two men sat drinking at the ricketty table.

"You'd better take them things to old Israel and get 'em out'n the way in case of accident; and mind what he gives you for 'em. Them's rale jewels, if *I* know anythink about rale jewels," said the old woman from her bed.

"Which you don't. Not the least. But them's rale, sure enough; because it aint possible as a rich lady, rolling in gold, would go for to put her onliest child into imitation trash," said Black Bill.

"Well then you better go and make sure on 'em. There'll be a hue and cry next."

"There is a hue and cry now, I shouldn't wonder; only it won't come down our way."

"Well, anyhow, why don't you go and take the things to the Jew?"

"Because we must wait here for the gentleman. I saw him on the Strand arter Bill carried off the child. He said he was coming to settle to-night," said Roger.

"One of you can stay here to see him and the other can go and sell the jewels."

"Not if we knows it," laughed both the brothers, speaking at once.

"We wants to stay here together to see the gentleman and get the money," said Red Roger.

"So we can have fair play and diwide it equal, share and share alike," added Black Bill.

"And then we wants to go together to Israel's to sell the jewels and get the price," pursued Red Roger.

—"So we can diwide the same fair and equal," added Black Bill.

By this it will be seen that there was no "honor among thieves" in this case. Neither would trust the other.

"Here he is now," said Roger, as a step was heard upon the stairs.

A few moments after, there was a rap at the door.

Black Bill opened it and admitted Everage.

"You have got the child?" he eagerly demanded.

But before any one could reply, his eyes fell upon little Lenny sleeping on the girl Meg's lap.

"Yes, as your honor sees, we've got him fast enough," answered Roger.

Everage approached the sleeping child and gazed in his tranquil face.

"Did he cry much?" he inquired, in a subdued tone.

"'Cry?'" laughed Black Bill. "'Cry?'—Lord love you, sir, no! He thought it was all a frolic, and he whooped 'stop thief' with the lustiest on 'em till the clorryfum quieted of him."

"But when he was brought here?"

"Oh, he was asleep then."

"Good Heaven!" exclaimed Everage, fairly jumping off his feet with fright, "has he been in that state ever since?"

"Lord bless your honor, no, sir! He woke up bright as a sky lark the minute we flung water in his face."

"And *then* was he frightened? Did he cry for his mother?"

"Lord love you, no, sir! Never see such a plucky little cove. He scolded us men, and he petted Meg, and he put his precious little cap on the old woman's head. Such a figure it made of her—ha! ha! ha!—ho! ho! ho!" laughed both brothers.

"Then he was not terrified or distressed?"

"*He* terrified or distressed! You ought to have heard how he ordered us all around until he got sleepy, and then he insisted on Meg rocking him to sleep. And she did it."

"Has he had his supper?"

"No, your honor. He didn't ask for no supper. Why, sir, his hands were full of buns when I snatched him up and run off with him," said Black Bill.

"But if he wakes up hungry, what have you got to give him?"

"Well, unless the old woman has a bit of bread and a lump of cheese, I don't know as there's anything else."

"I thought so. I must go out and buy him some milk. Where can I find any hereabouts?"

"Well, sir, there's a shop at the corner of the next street where they sells it. But, master, how about the pay?"

"Oh, you shall have it," said Everage, taking out his old portmonaie and drawing from its interior three ten pound notes, the price of his valuable jewelled gold watch and chain, his own seal ring, a costly microscope that had once been his delight, and other sacred treasures spared from sacrifice till now.

"I promised you ten pounds each, I think. Here they are." And he handed a note to each of his confederates.

"And now," he said, "I must go and get some milk for the child."

"I will go, your worship," said Roger.

"Very well. I shall thank you. Here is a sixpence," said Everage.

"If your honor pleases, I must buy a mug or summut to fetch it in."

"Here is another sixpence. And now make haste. I want to see the child comfortable before I leave him to-night."

"All right, your honor; I'll be back in no time," said Roger, starting out of the room.

"But—— where are you going to lay him?" inquired Everage, glancing at the old woman's foul bed with a visible shudder.

"Oh, your honor, it's all right. He shall sleep with me," said the crone.

"No, I would rather he did not. Can't he sleep with the girl?"

"But she shares my bed, your honor."

"Have you no other bedding?" he inquired, glancing around the room.

"Lord love you, sir, where would the likes of us get it? No, your honor, you see all we have."

"Where do the men sleep?"

"La, sir, anywheres or nowheres! most in general nowheres! If so be they happen to be at home a night they just fling themselves down onto the floor."

"Well," sighed the poor gentleman, "I suppose there is no help for it to-night, and he must sleep as he can; but to-morrow I must get some clean bedding for his use. I wish you to take good care of the little fellow for the few hours or days he will be with you; but I must get him out of the country as soon as possible."

With Everage "as soon as possible" meant as soon as by any means he could raise the money to do so.

"If you please, sir——" began Meg, in a timid voice.

"Well, my girl, what is it?" inquired Everage, turning and looking at her, and thinking what a fine frank face was hers, notwithstanding that she was the child and companion of thieves and outcasts.

"If you please, sir, I would not lay him on that bed. He aint hardened to it, and he could not sleep, sir. It is full of bugs," said Meg.

"But what's to be done? You can't hold him in your arms all night."

"'Deed I'd sooner do it, sir, than see him eat up alive. But please, sir, if so be I might make so bold——"

"Yes, yes, to be sure. Go on."

—"The shops is all open yet, sir, and if so be as you could send out and buy him a little clean blanket—a coarse one would do—I could make him a pallet in the corner of the room and cover him over with his own little mantle," said Meg.

"Well thought of, my girl. How much will it take to buy one?" inquired Everage, for his funds were very, very low.

"A crown would do it—maybe less."

"Can you do this errand for me, my man?" inquired Everage, turning to Black Bill.

"If your honor wills; but it will take seven shillings at the least," said the ruffian.

Everage produced the required amount and handed it over to the man, who arose and lounged out of the room.

"And now I must not forget this," said Everage, picking up a bundle he had brought in with him, unrolling it, and displaying a full suit of baby's clothing, including the night-gown, all of the cheapest and plainest material, faded and patched, but perfectly clean; for it belonged to his own little two-year-old Clara, and had been privately taken from his wife's bureau drawer. "He must not remain in his fine clothes lest he should be accidentally seen. Put this night-gown on him to-night, and to-morrow dress him in this suit; and be sure to hide away or destroy the others. Do you understand?" he inquired, as he passed the bundle over to Meg.

"Yes, please sir."

The door opened and the two brothers came in together—Black Bill, with a small, coarse, cradle-blanket on his arm; and Red Roger, with a mug of milk in his hand.

Everage himself took the purchases from them, and gave them into the keeping of the girl, whom he trusted more than all the rest of the gang.

Then he waited until he saw Meg undress the child and put it in his clean, patched night-gown, while little Lenny slept heavily the sleep of fatigue through the whole process.

"Now, if you will hold him on your knees half a minute, I'll spread his pallet," said the girl, laying the child on the lap of Everage.

As soon as his pallet was prepared, she took him, still sleeping, and laid him on it, covering him over with his own little mantle.

"And you'd better keep the milk handy so as to give it to him to drink if he should wake hungry or thirsty," said Everage.

"Yes, sir, I will. I will just fling myself down on the floor by his pallet, and take care of him, sir," replied Meg.

"And you shall not go unrewarded for your care of him," said the poor gentleman, loftily.

And then, having given his confederates an extra caution in regard to the child, and promised, or rather threatened, to look in the next night, Everage left the house and bent his steps homeward.

Surely little Lenny's guardian angel inspired poor Meg that night. She laid herself down on the bare boards beside his pallet, and resting her head upon her bent arm, with her face towards the child, watched him until she became too drowsy to keep her eyes open; and even then she slept like a watch dog, on the alert, and at the slightest motion of her charge she would wake up to see if he wanted water, or milk, or to spread the mantle over him.

But Lenny slept soundly until morning.

At his usual time of waking, a little after sunrise, he opened his eyes. At first he stared around himself in utter bewilderment. Then he saw Meg bending over him, and he recognized her face, and he remembered the incidents of the preceding night.

"Why didn't you, Met?" he inquired, looking reproachfully in her face.

"Why didn't I do what, my pretty?" smiled the girl.

"Wate me up when Doosa tomed."

"But Doosa didn't come, my pretty bird."

"Doosa didn't tome?"

"No, pretty."

"But Doosa say she tome."

"So she did; but then she said she couldn't, and now she says she will come to-day."

"Tome to-day?"

"Yes."

"Tome soon?"

"Yes."

Lenny smiled, and then all out of season, he remembered a certain matutinal formula that he had forgotten under his unusual circumstances, and he suddenly said:

"Dood mornin', Met!"

Meg, taken all aback by this unexpected salutation, did not respond.

"Dood mornin', Met. Why don't you say dood mornin' to me?"

"Good morning, pretty bird."

"Me not pretty bird—me 'ittle boy."

"Good morning, little boy."

"Tiss dood mornin', Met."

The girl caught him up in her arms and kissed him enthusiastically.

To her dark and gloomy life he had come like some beautiful, brilliant bird of Heaven, and she prized him and delighted in him. It was something of the same sort of natural passion that a child feels for its first wonderful wax doll, or its first beautiful live pet, only it was much more intense, inasmuch as this was a living, loving, talking doll—a beautiful, intelligent human pet.

And so she kissed him, and hugged him, and shook him, and danced him, and prattled to him, and called him all the sweet names that, on such cases, spring spontaneously to the lips of girls and women.

And Lenny, in his gracious, genial nature, gave kiss for kiss, and caress for caress.

I think if poor Drusilla, waking in her agony of bereavement, that same morning, could have seen, as in a magic glass, these two friends—the girl and the baby,—she would have been contented,—no, not that, but she would have felt comforted.

"Lenny love Met," said the child, patting her cheeks.

"And 'Met' loves Lenny dearly, dearly, dearly! and nobody shall hurt him—they shall kill 'Met' first!"

Now, as "hurt" and "kill" were words that had never been introduced into this cherished baby's vocabulary, he did not understand and did not know how to reply; but he felt that *love* was meant throughout, and he knew how to answer *that*. So he patted Meg's cheeks and kissed her lips.

And now as the long-lingering light of day stole into that wretched attic-chamber, it brought out strange pictures. The yellow rays of the sun, striking obliquely through the window in the roof, fell upon the corner occupied by Meg and Lenny, and lighted up a picturesque group,—the beautiful, golden-haired, blue-eyed baby-boy, fair as one of Rafael's pictured angels, with his rosy arms clasped around the neck of the wild, dark, gipsyish girl, who held him on her lap; and their surroundings,—the poor pallet, the little stone-jug of milk, the bare boards, and the broken walls. This was the only sunny scene in the room.

In the shadows were other scenes, best left in darkness,—the beldam in her foul bed, and the two men sprawling on the naked floor. All these were dead to all surrounding life, for they were heavily sleeping off the effects of the last night's gin-drinking.

To return to the "sunny" spot occupied by the girl and the baby. She was still caressing him.

"Would Lenny like his breakfast now?" she asked.

"Yes, Lenny like beakfas'. But go in baf-tub first."

"Go—where?" inquired the girl, quite bewildered.

"In baf-tub! baf-tub! baf-tub! wash!"

"Oh, bath-tub! My bonny bird, we have got no bath-tub here, but 'Met' will wash you clean—will she?"

"Yes, Met wash."

"Will Lenny be afraid to stay here while 'Met' goes to fetch water?"

"'Faid? what 'faid?"

"You don't know? Well, I hope you never will."

"What 'faid? what 'faid? what 'faid?" peremptorily demanded this despotic little inquisitor.

"'Faid is—bad, naughty," said Meg, after some little perplexity.

"No, Lenny not 'faid."

"And will Lenny let 'Met' go get some water?"

"Yes."

"And sit here and don't move until I come?"

"Yes."

Away ran the girl, and as quickly as she could borrow a bucket and fetch the water she returned to the room.

She washed the child very thoroughly and then dressed him in the clean suit that had been provided by Everage.

"But dese aint Lenny tose," observed the child.

"No, Lenny has got no clean clothes here, so Lenny must wear these," said the girl.

And the child trusted her and was content with the answer.

"And now Lenny will have his breakfast?" she asked.

"Yes; and Met have *hers* too," answered the child.

The girl then went to the sleeping men and felt in their pockets. She knew very well that both had cheated their employer in the matter of the price of the milk and the blanket that they had been sent to buy on the previous night, and so she judged they must have the odd change they had swindled Everage out of still in their possession.

She was right. She found a sixpence in Roger's pocket and two shillings in Bill's. She replaced all the money except one of the shillings, which she confiscated to the use of the right owner, as she called Little Lenny.

Having possessed herself of this fund, she turned to the child and took him by the hand, saying:

"Will Lenny take a walk with 'Met'?"

"Lenny want bekfas first."

"Well, we are going out to buy milk for breakfast—nice new milk. Will Lenny go?"

"Pose Doosa tome?" objected the child.

"But Doosa won't come before we get back."

"Well, den Lenny go wid Met."

And they walked out together down to the corner of the alley to the cellar, where the milk was sold.

And Meg bought new milk and fresh rolls, and a little cheap white mug and plate, all for nine pence.

And then she took Lenny back to the attic and gave him his breakfast clean.

And through all this the beasts in the attic slept on.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

ONE FAULT.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

In the fall of 18— I was invited to dine with the Lynches. The party was only a small one of intimate family friends, but was to be followed in the evening by a *conversazione*, or gathering of literary and other celebrities. I had been some years absent in India. The Lynches had been living in a very quiet way, and were only in moderate circumstances when I left the country; and I confess my curiosity was somewhat excited as to the change in their mode of life and social position which enabled them to give dinner parties and entertain celebrities. Otherwise I should hardly have accepted the invitation; for I was not in strong health, and had no desire to be shown up to a group of strangers as the celebrated Eastern traveller.

I had hunted elephants and tigers in India, and even those fiercer and more formidable wild beasts, the Sepoys and mutineers, during the rebellion; but I did not consider that these feats entitled me to public notice. I felt humble, rather, and grateful to Him who gave success to my efforts in rescuing those poor ladies from the hands of the monsters at Hyderabad. I was not proud. I shrank from praise of that act. Not in my own strength, nor cunning, nor prowess, had I conquered, and I could not bear to hear people talk as if I had. Above all, I never wanted the horrors of that scene recalled to me; and that, perhaps, more than anything else, made me shrink from the sort of exhibition which the Lynches seemed determined to force upon me. Still, for once, under the influence of the curiosity I have mentioned, and perhaps led by a yet undeveloped motive, I consented to enter such a scene.

I little guessed the results of the evening, the very anticipation of which bored me so. How strange it is that in this life such wondrous changes often spring from the most trivial events.

Among the guests at the dinner were Mr. and Mrs. Ligon, as I shall call them, to whom I was introduced by my hostess before we went to the table. The introduction took place among a number of others, and somewhat hurriedly, as dinner was announced before they were complete. I had, therefore, no opportunity to notice with particularity my new acquaintances.

For some reason—perhaps because being a stranger—I was considered the most important guest. I took Mrs. Lynch to dinner, and was seated at her right hand. Opposite me were Mrs. Ligon and the gentleman who took her down, and next below me, on the same side, were Mrs. Abbott, a gay widow, and Mr. Ligon, who had come down with her.

Seated at table and preliminaries over, I had leisure to observe my neighbors, which has been a habit of mine all over the world.

I soon saw that Mrs. Lynch, though living now in an elegant house in one of the up-town squares, was the same commonplace, almost vulgar, woman I had known in the little brick, six-roomed house on Greenwich Avenue years before. She had stood still while commerce with the world and mingling with large minds had improved her husband into a really polished gentleman, and a man of great and varied knowledge. She had apparently competent servants who had served the dinner well; but she had so fussily ordered, counter-ordered, and found fault, as to greatly disconcert and interrupt them. Seeing that her thoughts were all on "household cares intent," I turned my attention to others in the neighborhood.

Beside me sat Mrs. Abbott, the gay widow, whom my experience enabled me at once to set down as "fast." Seeing me glance at her, she addressed me in a mincing, affected tone, asking me if it was not fearfully hot in India; if it was not dangerous to catch elephants, and what sort of trap I used; also, if it was not perfectly delightful to sail on the Ganges in a *bungalow*.

I believe I did keep my countenance, for I am not easily disconcerted, and I do not expect people whom I meet to be well-informed relative to matters they have had no opportunity of learning; but a display of conceit and ignorance disgusts me. I therefore replied to Mrs. Abbott's inquiries as civilly and briefly as possible, and left her to return to her flirtation with Mr. Ligon, which was carried on with many affected whisperings and much loud laughter; which, so far as I could perceive, was about nothing at all. Mr. Ligon had exchanged a few words with me, and then devoted himself to his fair neighbor. He had a courteous and polished bearing, but his eye was cold and his manner devoid of sympathy.

I now turned my attention to Mrs. Ligon. Her face was the most pallid I ever saw, and her eye the saddest; and yet I detected no evidence of ill health to account for these circumstances. Her cheek was round, fair, and almost transparent, and there were few lines on her face, except an evident contraction of the muscles of the mouth, which indicated suppressed emotion. Her quiet attitude was almost statue-like. One saw only the necessary movements of the table, and an occasional furtive, almost frightened, glance at her husband.

Her companion was a dapper little gentleman, with a great flow of words, which I suppose he mistook for conversation. Occasionally he would pause for a reply, when she would slowly raise her large, dark eyes, fix them for an instant upon her husband's face, as if seeking permission to speak, or instruction how to speak. Once he returned the glance with a scowl of almost demoniac hate, gone almost before seen; but I saw a wild look of terror grow above the sadness of those eyes, while about her mouth a ghastly blue tinge displaced the marble pallor.

"There is some ghastly skeleton in that household," I said to myself. "She dreads her husband, and he hates her."

At that instant, she saw that I was observing her, and a slight flush rose over the pallor of her face. She turned to her neighbor, and, for the first time, volunteered a remark. She smiled—she once even laughed aloud. I saw that she was trying to conquer and efface all indications of her depression, and I saw by the glances she now cast toward her husband that she seemed to defy him.

Her face, when she smiled, grew wondrously beautiful. Its pure whiteness seemed to receive an illumination from within. There had been a charm in the sadness of those eyes,—there was a more wonderful charm in the expression of sweet joyousness that now and then gleamed from them. The transformation was beyond belief. A few moments ago, she sat there—a sad, pale, silent woman of thirty. Now she was a joyous girl, who seemed not to have seen more than three-and-twenty summers,—gleeful, beautiful, with no shadow of sorrow or care on her sweet face.

This continued for some time. Meanwhile the flirtation of Mrs. Abbott and Mr. Lyon grew fast and furious. The gentleman was in a grim humor, saying the bitterest, most sarcastic words under the guise of jest; and his companion, who had no penetration, only laughed the harder. He still watched his wife, and every smile of hers roused his smoldering fury. I found myself wondering how long this could go on without an outbreak.

All this time I had not forgotten to be civil to my hostess. But she had so little time and thought for me that I was much at leisure, and the couples before and beside me were so absorbed in their own several affairs as to be quite heedless of my observation.

At last, Mrs. Ligon, in the ardor of conversation, for one moment laid her small, beautifully-formed hand upon the table. The glove had been removed when she sat down to dinner, and I saw gleaming upon the third finger, where it was placed as keeper of the wedding-ring, a ring containing a solitary diamond of unusual size and lustre.

As she did this, I saw her husband turn suddenly toward her. His gaze seemed fixed upon the hand; a fiery gleam lit up his angry eyes and flashed across his swarthy cheek. The glance seemed to paralyse his wife. The sweet glow faded out of her cheek, leaving it to its dull pallor. She paused in the midst of the gay sentence she was speaking, and seemed unable even to recall what she had been saying. She drew back her hand with a gesture of disgust, and I saw her suddenly clutch at the ring, as if striving to wrench it from her hand. The sadness came back to her eyes, the rigid stiffness to her figure. Once more she was the gloomy, silent woman who had been my *vis-a-vis*, and so remained till the ladies rose from the table and left us of the stronger sex to our guzzling and politics.

Mr. Ligon drew his chair nearer to mine, and entered into conversation. I found him intelligent and courteous, but still the lack of sympathy, the something hidden that shut him out from frank intercourse with his kind, was apparent to me. I had decided that he ill-treated his beautiful, sad wife, and felt an inward repugnance to him which courtesy could hardly force me to conceal. He drank a good deal, while I took no wine, which formed my apology for soon leaving the table, to join the ladies up stairs.

Here I found, most unexpectedly, in one of the ladies I had met for a moment before dinner, an old acquaintance, who, while I was toiling in India, had grown from childhood and was now a wife, a mother, and the mistress of one of the finest mansions on the square.

When our mutual flow of memories and reminiscences was checked, I reverted to Mrs. Ligon. That lady had been seated at the piano, discoursing sweetest music by touch and voice. Her hand faltered and her voice trembled as her husband entered the room and advanced toward her. She immediately rose from the instrument and retired to a corner, where she sat pale and silent, till the entrance of more guests hid her from my sight.

"Mr. Ligon," said my friend, "was a jeweler's clerk, and his wife, the daughter of Dr. ———" naming a well-known clergyman, "whose high position and large private wealth caused his family to move in a much higher sphere than his own. Suddenly it was announced in society that Emma ——— was about to marry Alfred Ligon. Not one of her acquaintances had ever heard of him before. To her parents he was a stranger. They only knew that his antecedents were respectable and his character above reproach. So much they had learned from his employers. They could only say that he was about to commence business for himself, and that Emma was determined to marry him. She would listen to no reason, and they supposed she was greatly attached to him, as he evidently was to her. They were married. Some believed that Emma was a reluctant bride; but, though pale and singularly quiet, from the day of her engagement, she never faltered nor sought sympathy.

Mr. Ligon had prospered. On Dr. ———'s death, a considerable property was inherited by his wife, and had been the means of helping him forward rapidly. He was now considered a very rich man. Since his marriage, Mrs. Ligon had been always as I saw her—pale and silent, evidently in care of her husband. He always spoke kindly to her, and was very agreeable in society—a greater favorite than she. People used to think there was a mystery about them, but they had forgotten it now.

Such was the substance of the story I heard.

* * * * * * *

Two years passed away, and many changes had occurred among the party I had met at the Lynchs'. Mr. Lynch had failed, and the family had gone back, embittered and complaining, to the obscurity from which they had emerged—all but Mr. Lynch, who bore up bravely. I was now the owner of the elegant mansion to which they had welcomed me, and Mr. Lynch was the agent of the estate which had unexpectedly fallen to me. In preparing the house for the reception of the bride, who was soon coming home, I had great pleasure in restoring to Mrs. Lynch and her daughters all the costly furniture to which they had been so greatly attached.

My old acquaintance, who had told me the story of the Ligons, was a widow, now a near neighbor of mine, who I hoped was to be one of my wife's best friends, as she was of mine.

Mr. Ligon had eloped with Mrs. Abbott. The wretched pair took passage to Europe, whither Mr. Ligon had transmitted all the property he could turn into money. He was lost overboard during the voyage, and the woman for whom he risked so much was left to the dreadful fate which follows a fallen woman.

This had happened within three months from the time I first met them. For a long time after these sad events Mrs. Ligon had lived in the greatest obscurity. Her outward position was greatly changed. Her property was gone, and though she eventually recovered a portion of it, it was not sufficient to enable her, even if she had wished, to live in her former style.

But the greatest change of all was in herself. She was like a new being. The sadness was gone from her eye, the pallor from her cheek. She seemed filled with renewed hope. The sweet smile I had once noticed brought back to her face the innocent youthfulness of expression which I imagine was once her most peculiar charm.

Once in an unguarded moment she said to me, with a *naive* frankness, "I enjoy my seclusion. I do not care for society, for money, for style. I like to stay at home, and enjoy my freedom." She paused, blushed, then added—"Do not think hardly of me, Mr. Belton. You little know what I have suffered," and the old frozen look came back to her face, and told the story of those long years of pain and repression.

It was this woman who was to be my wife, whom I was soon to bring home. She had powerfully interested me from the very first, and as soon as she was free I had determined to win her. I saw how she had suffered, and I hoped my love would compensate for the past.

It was not until the eve of our marriage that she found courage to impart to me the secret of her sorrow and remorse, though the confession had often lingered on her lips, as I knew, but I would not hear. It was when we parted on the eve of that morrow that was to see us united forever, that she handed me the little package which contained the annexed story:

"You think you know me well, and you are willing to take me *with* all my faults,—in spite of them. I cannot in common honesty go to you, as your wife, till I have told you all the wretched secret of my life. But for my miserable cowardice I had done so long before. If when you have read this you feel unwilling to ally yourself with one like me, there is still time to withdraw. Tell me so, and I shall not have to feign the illness that will prevent the marriage to-morrow. I know that you will not wish to expose my sin and weakness, and the world may still be in ignorance of it. But oh, if—but I will not think of that other blessed alternative. To my sad story.

"You know my parentage, and the strictness of my rearing. It may have been too strict, leaving me perhaps not even reasonable freedom of thought and action. Be that as it may, it forms no excuse for the one great error of my life, nor do I advance it. I only say that I might have been saved the temptation I so weakly yielded to.

"My parents demanded of me a plainness of dress unusual among the girls of my acquaintance. Cheap material, few ornaments, they deemed proper for a young girl, while I had the fondness for display natural to my sex and age. A plain but good watch, and a brooch or two, were all the jewelry I boasted, articles not so much ornamental as useful. I coveted more—gay sparkling toys, such as no other girls had. And so I fell.

"Rome and Patton were our jewellers, and I sometimes went to them on our slight errands. It was here that Mr. Ligon was clerk, and I noticed, after a time, that he always came forward to wait on me. I knew him in no other way. He was, of course, not in the same social position as myself.

"One day I went there to get a brooch I had left for repair. Mr. Ligon as usual came forward to speak to me, then left me to seek the brooch in the back part of the shop. A little tray of gleaming diamond ornaments had been in his hand, which he carelessly placed on the glass case. It did not occur to him, probably, that it was likely to be unsafe with me.

"For a moment I was alone. There before me sparkled the bright temptation. I took up the rings, one by one, and admired them. I give you my word, I had no thought of appropriating one of them, as I slowly slipped them on and off my slim fingers. I felt a strong desire to possess one, as it glittered there—but to steal! I should have shuddered at the thought.

"Five minutes later I was hurrying along the street—a thief! So, perhaps, often circumstances aiding temptation make us criminal. An instant turns the scale—we were innocent, we are guilty!

"One of the proprietors, a stern, hard man, came in, glanced keenly at me, and at the tray. His voice, his look, petrified me. I had just slipped a great solitaire diamond upon my finger. In intense fright, I saw him, with another keen glance at me, take up the tray and replace it in the case. At that instant Mr. Ligon returned with the brooch. I had only to take it and go away. I was miserable, and wanted to return the ring, but dared not. I went out trembling; as I went I heard a sharp reproof for his carelessness administered to Mr. Ligon, and a low reply—'The Rev. Dr. ———'s daughter. One could not suspect her.'

"I went along the street in a horrible dream. 'Thief' seemed written on every wall and post. I wrung my hands in despair, under my shawl, and groaned in agony. Presently I heard a quick step behind me. I expected each moment to feel the clutch of an officer on my shoulder. It came, it nearly passed me. I looked up, and saw a face that looked friendly—that of Mr. Ligon. My own would have betrayed me. Instinctively I held out my hand. 'Take it back,' I said—'I never meant to steal it, but Mr. Rome looked at me so suspiciously, and put the tray away before I could return it. Don't let me be arrested. Pray take it back.'

"'I saw you take it,' he said, in a voice that sounded kind. 'Of course you are not a thief by intention. I will help you, if I can. Mr. Rome suspects, but is not certain. He has not kept the proper account of the rings in that tray.'

"'Do take it,' I said, with tears, holding it out to him.

"'Nay, listen a moment,' he said. 'They will always believe you a thief if you return it now. Accept it from me, as an engagement ring. I love you, dear Miss ———. Be my wife, and no suspicion will reach you!'

"He said a great deal more. He made me believe that I was ruined, but for his aid. He made me believe in his disinterestedness. He promised to pay for the ring, and assure the owners that he had purchased it for me. I was wretched, and deceived, and I consented. My parents, at least, would know nothing of it.

"You know all now, but the misery that followed. He did not inform my parents, but he allowed the firm to suspect me. He made the ring the ever-present means of my torture, for he compelled me to wear it always, and a glance at it from his eye crushed me into abject obedience to his will. I married without loving him, and became his victim from that hour. None guessed the insults, the contempt, the more than indifference which replaced his love, hot and fierce enough at first, but soon burnt out and extinguished by my passionate misery and cold endurance. I came to hate and dread him, and the first moment of joy I had known for years was when I learned that I was free. I think sometimes that I have suffered enough for expiation of the scarcely intended crime, but the hateful fact that I was once a thief remains. I trust I have been pardoned, but I know not if you can pardon me. Yet in any event I am glad I have had courage to tell you."

You will know that I pardoned her, and rather pitied than blamed the tender conscience, when I tell you she has long been my wife—the blessing of my life.

THE EVIL GENIUS.

By ELIZA A. DUPUY,

AUTHOR OF "THE WHITE TERROR," "WARNING VOICE," "THE FATAL ERROR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XLIV.

In two weeks' time Nina had regained all the charm of her beauty, and was more attractive than ever. When she was able to appear again in the family circle, Mrs. Hastings received her with such marked coldness that Nina wondered if a suspicion of her actual position had entered her mind. She cared not; she had a right to be there as the daughter of the house, and she would maintain her ground at all hazards, at least until she found it desirable to seek another home for herself.

Nina believed that she could influence her father to any course she wished him to take; for in the few moments he could snatch with her alone, he showed the same idolatrous fondness for her which had stimulated her failing senses and brought her back to life on that memorable night. Yet her feelings toward him were of a very mixed nature. She could not be entirely insensible to his demonstrations of affection, but she bitterly felt that he had wronged her unfortunate mother too deeply to be entirely forgiven by her child. She resented the stain upon herself, and eagerly watched for an opportunity to ask an explanation of the early events of his life.

Nina felt fully assured that the pale woman whose acquaintance she had casually made in Norfolk was her own mother; and she understood why Mrs. Marsden referred to the loss of her children as a judgment. She had forsaken her eldest-born—left her to be reared by strangers; and with curling lip Nina thought that she had met a fitting reward. She had no pity for that unhappy mother; she too deeply resented the thought that she had no right to claim the name of her own father, through that mother's weakness; for, loving her as Mr. Hastings evidently had, he would have married her had she been less credulous and trusting.

At any rate, she would be provided for as his daughter should be. She had made up her mind to that, and only awaited an opportunity to tell him so.

This was at length afforded by a visit made by Mrs. Hastings and Opal to spend the day at Magnolia, where it was understood another day for the bridal was to be settled on. Nina was scarcely strong enough to leave home yet, so they did not press her to accompany them. Mr. Hastings also declined going under the plea of business, which would take him to Natchez, and his wife saw him ride away before she left herself. She went into the library where Nina was, and coldly said to her:

"Good-bye, Miss Gordon. I am sorry to leave you so long alone; but you must take the best care of yourself while we are gone. If you should do anything to make yourself ill again, I believe my husband would lose the little sense he seems to have left."

To this sarcastic speech Nina sweetly replied:

"I shall do very well, dear Mrs. Hastings. I am fond of reading, you know, and there are some new books with which to wile away the hours of your absence. I shall miss Opal to-day, for of late she has been a delightful companion to me; but you treat me with such extreme coldness that I am often wounded by it."

Her eyes were filled with tears; and Mrs. Hastings hurriedly replied:

"You should be able to understand the reason, Miss Gordon. No woman likes to see her husband make a fool of himself about another one, and of late William seems always in a fidget about you. I wish you would go away. If you will, without saying that I instigated you to do so, I will give you something handsome. I have talked with him on this subject; but he will not listen to my proposal for settling you elsewhere, and I now appeal to *you*. I am sure that you care nothing for him, or I should not have borne with your presence as long as I have; and when you are once gone, my husband will return to his sober senses again."

"This is a singular request to make of me, Mrs. Hastings. If my presence is distasteful to you, you have the power to send me from beneath your roof," replied Nina, haughtily. "So far as I am concerned, I assure you that you have nothing to fear."

"I know that, or I should not have appealed to you at all. I have watched you more closely than you suspected, and I have sometimes thought that you despise the gray-haired old fool who seems to have lost his head about you. What do you say now to a thousand a year enjoyed at the north? That income will enable you to live handsomely there, and it is a trifle to me. I should hardly miss it."

Nina thought rapidly. It was the one object of her life to secure money; and if her father was really too poor to bestow it on her, here was a chance to secure something for herself, of which she hastened to take advantage. She coolly said:

"I have no wish to remain here till the marriage of your daughter takes place. The sum you offer me will be equal to the interest of ten thousand dollars at ten per cent. Settle the ten thousand upon me, and I will go the week before the wedding. I would not willingly remain here to be a cause of unhappiness to you; and I candidly tell you, madam, that I do not believe your husband would permit me to leave his house unless he knew that I was adequately provided for."

Mrs. Hastings flushed, and her eyes flashed at this bold assertion; but she stifled her wrath and said:

"It is a bargain, Miss Gordon. I will write to the lawyer in Natchez who manages my legal affairs, and have the business arranged. The day of the marriage will be settled before we return from Magnolia, and you will know how long you can remain."

Nina took Mrs. Hastings' hand, though she made a movement as if she would have withheld it, and in her softest tone said:

"How shall I thank you, dear madam, for affording me the means of escape from a position that is very painful to me. I shall leave your house, carrying with me a deep sense of gratitude for the liberality you have shown. I need this money, or I would not accept it from you."

"I give it freely to rid myself of an incubus. I am jealous, I admit it; and I cannot bear a rival in the heart of my husband, even if she is herself indifferent to him."

"I understand your feelings, and I promise to do all that is possible to remove myself from Mr. Hastings' presence. But our conference is ended, for here comes Opal."

Opal came into the library. She looked much depressed, and traces of recent tears might have been detected by a close observer. She listlessly said:

"The carriage is at the door, mamma, and I am quite ready. It seems cruel to leave you all alone, Nina; but I am not permitted to remain with you. I had far rather do so than go to Magnolia on the errand that takes us there. If I were mistress of my own actions, I would stay here with you to-day; and I would do something else, too, that would set people to talking; but I am under the control of others, so good-bye; and don't fatigue yourself too much while we are gone."

Nina held out her hand with a bright smile, and affectionately said:

"Adieu, Opal! to the gods I commend you, and I am sure that your guardian-angel will keep you from doing any thing which will compromise your happiness."

"I don't know. I have a suspicion that what will be settled to-day will not add to it much."

Encouraged by their father, a more intimate companionship had been established between the two girls, and Opal had begun to attach herself to Nina and to speak openly of her own affairs to her. Mrs. Hastings arose with a slight frown, and led the way out. In a few more moments, she and her daughter were whirling away from the door.

Opal nodded from the window to her they left behind, and Nina's lip curled disdainfully, while she clenched her hands till the nails almost wounded the flesh. She bitterly muttered:

"Aye, go on your way to fix the day that will seal your own wretchedness, if *I* permit such iniquity to be consummated. But it shall not—it *shall not!* I hate her, but I will save her from becoming Godfrey Fenton's wife. I hate her because she is rich, courted, almost worshipped, and *I* am as nothing beside her. I hate her because she has the right to bear the name of our father, and I, the eldest born, can lay no claim to it. But he shall make me equal with her—I swear it by my mother's wrongs. The atonement he spoke of shall be amply made."

Nina returned to the library, but she did not attempt to read; her mind was in too great a ferment to permit her to fix her thoughts on a book. Since her illness she had not once seen Fenton, and she began to thirst for his presence; for the sound of his voice, as the traveller in an arid desert thirsts for the rippling of water. Opal, under her father's influence, had drawn nearer to her, and showed that she could easily learn to love her, but in Nina's heart no corresponding emotion was awakened for her rival with the man who had mastered her whole being till her soul cried aloud that she could not lose him; could not surrender him to another, indifferent as he had proved himself to her.

The hours passed Nina scarcely knew how, till a tempting little dinner, served with the port wine the doctor had ordered for her, was placed before her. She ate with appetite, for she was passing through that stage of convalescence in which dainty food is a necessity, and after taking several glasses of the wine, she returned to the library, and coiling herself upon a comfortable lounge, fell fast asleep.

CHAPTER XLV.

How long she had slept Nina did not know, when she was awakened by a kiss falling lightly on her brow, and she aroused herself to find her father looking down on her with an expression of the tenderest love.

"My darling," he said, "at last I have been able to secure a long and uninterrupted conversation with you. I hurried back on purpose, as soon as I could finish my business, and we have several hours to talk with each other before Laura's return."

Nina sat up, arranged her dress, and calmly said:

"I expected you to do so, sir, for something must be settled as to my future position. I am dissatisfied with being here in this clandestine manner, with my near relationship to you unsuspected. Besides, Mrs. Hastings is becoming desperately jealous of me."

He regarded her with mournful surprise; and, with some chagrin, said:

"I thought you would be so happy to know me as your father, Nina, that you would be perfectly contented to remain with me—to make up to me for all the years in which I was forced to separate myself from you. Do you wish to go from me, my daughter?"

"If I can do better for myself than by remaining—I answer, Yes. You will find it impossible to keep me under the same roof with your wife. Enough has lately passed between her and myself to convince me of that."

Her reply appeared to give him intense pain, and he made several turns across the floor before he had determined what to say. Nina watched him keenly. She saw that her willingness to leave him had deeply wounded him, and she was not sorry for it. She felt bitter toward him, and she meant to sting him if she could. How else could she avenge her mother, she asked herself.

At length, Mr. Hastings drew near her, and, sitting down beside her, gently said:

"I have indulged the fond hope that I could retain you near me, Nina; but, if it is your wish to go away, I will not thwart it. I will make you such an allowance as will be in my power, but I have very little of my own. What I can command shall be freely lavished on you."

"Thank you. It is but just that you should do for me all that you possibly can. The wrong you have done me demands reparation, and I ask it in the name of my unfortunate mother."

"*Your mother!* why should you refer to her? You know nothing of her—you will never know more than I may choose to tell you."

Nina looked steadily in his face, and asked:

"What if I could name her to you?"

He became pale as death, gasped for breath, and, after an agitated pause, said:

"Nina, that crowning sorrow and humiliation shall be spared the unfortunate woman whose child you are. I trust in God that you have no clue to your mother, and I refuse to furnish one to you. The past is sealed to you; content yourself with knowing that you are *my* child, to be cared for as such, to be tenderly loved, if you are willing to accept my affection on my own terms."

She firmly replied:

"I *must* know that past, and I will furnish the key to it myself by telling you that I am convinced that the Anna Moore who is now known as Mrs. Marsden is my mother. She eloped with you from the house of Mr. Horton, whither you had gone as a suitor to his younger daughter. You saw the companion, and loved her better than the heiress. She disappeared from her old home, and remained away two years. She then came back, faded and half broken-hearted. She refused to give any account of herself during her absence, but the friends of her youth would not turn their backs upon her, and she was received into the family of a widowed brother of Mr. Horton, whose children she took charge of. Her employer emigrated to Virginia, and there, where her story was unknown, Miss Moore married her present husband. Am I not correct in my statements, sir?"

Nina might have talked on much longer, for her companion sat staring at her with wild eyes and pallid face. The cool hardihood with which she related the history of her own mother to the author of her wretchedness afforded him a painful glimpse into the nature he had to deal with. It was a bitter revelation to him, and he began to dread this creature for whose presence near him he had so ardently yearned. When Mr. Hastings did not reply, Nina again asked:

"Have I not stated the truth, sir? And now I demand as my right the history you are so anxious to keep from me. Tell me, tell me of that past, for I must know all."

In answer to this imperial demand, Mr. Hastings brokenly said:

"It is just that my sin should find me—that my punishment should come from *her* child. Oh, Nina, Nina! have you no pity for your unhappy father? no love to give in return for all he has lavished on you, from the very hour of your birth? You are dearer to me than Opal, for you are the child of the woman I loved better than my own soul."

"Yet you gave her shame and despair. Is that what adoring love lavishes on its object?" she bitterly asked. "How can you expect me to return your affection, when I have seen the broken-hearted woman who dared not claim me as her daughter? No, I do not love you—at moments, I almost hate you, even if you are my father."

Mr. Hastings covered his face with his hands, and hot tears, wrung from his wounded and bleeding heart, fell heavily upon the table on which he leaned. When he regained sufficient calmness, he sadly said:

"I could scarcely have expected a different result when the truth became known to you, and that is why I so long and carefully withheld it. In a moment of high-wrought excitement, when I believed you to be dying, I told you the cherished secret of my life. If I had believed it possible for you to live, I would still have guarded it from you, and with good cause; for I feel that you are making a most ungenerous use of my confidence. You are forcing me to betray what I consider it vitally important to conceal from you. What use do you propose to make of the knowledge you have gained, Nina? I trust that you will spare your unfortunate mother, and never permit her to know that my weakness laid bare the record of our wretched past before you."

Nina steadily replied:

"If you do not give me the story in its minutest particulars, I shall apply to her for them. Choose your own course, sir, but my mind is irrevocably made up; I will know all, either from you or her."

Mr. Hastings regarded her almost with horror. In broken tones he exclaimed:

"So young! so hard! Where did you get that nature from, Nina? It is not Anna's, nor is it mine."

"You forget, sir, that my mother had little reason to believe that *you* could not be hard. How else could you have deserted her, and married another woman while she was yet living? I am impatient for the revelation for which I am waiting. The afternoon is getting on, and Mrs. Hastings may come home earlier than she intended, in the fear that you and I might meet in her absence."

He saw that no alternative remained to him. He must speak at the bidding of this imperious and determined creature, and nerving himself for the task, Mr. Hastings presently began:

"Since you already know so much, little remains to be told. I met with Susan Horton at Saratoga, and was attracted by her beauty and fortune, for the last was important to me then. I followed her home, and there met the passion of my life in the person of a young girl who had been reared and educated as a dependent in the Horton family. There was a fate in it from which neither of us could escape. The love with which Anna Moore inspired me spurned all prudential considerations, and it was returned with equal ardor. It was a true union of hearts if one ever existed on earth.

"I lured Anna from her home under a promise of marriage; but I was too poor to make her really my wife. One of my college friends read over us a form of marriage, and Anna believed herself lawfully wedded to me."

Nina uttered an exclamation of joy.

"I am glad to hear that, sir, though it but adds to the turpitude of your own conduct."

"Alas! yes; I played the part of a villain. I know that without having such hard words spoken to me by you. But you are pitiless, Nina. In your sympathy for your mother you forget how bitterly I have suffered for my evil doing. Ah! if I could lay bare my heart before you, and show you how deeply I have repented that wrong—how willingly I would have repaired it, you might have some compassion for me, badly as I have acted."

Mr. Hastings paused, and Nina impatiently said:

"Go on, sir, if you please. I wish to know all that you will tell me."

With a heavy sigh he resumed:

"I had a few thousand dollars of my own, and I determined to abandon the practice of law, which I had not found lucrative, and embark in some speculations in South America which held out brilliant promise of reward, and I embarked with Anna for Rio Janeiro.

"There a year of as perfect happiness as mortals ever enjoyed, flew by on wings of light. Your birth gave the crowning joy to my poor Anna; but when I held you in my arms I first felt how irreparably I had wronged both mother and child. It was too late then to confess the base deception of which I had been guilty; for I dreaded what might follow if Anna became aware of the falsehood of which she had been made the victim.

"My business affairs had prospered, and I believed that I was in a fair way to secure the wealth I so ardently desired. I became most anxious to atone for the injury I had done your mother, and I was seriously thinking of becoming a Catholic that I might have a pretext for having the ceremony of marriage performed between us a second time; for you are aware that the Romish church does not recognize the sacredness of the service outside of its own pale.

"But just as I had determined on this course, a reverse as sudden as unexpected overwhelmed the fabric of my prosperity, and in a few weeks I found myself a ruined man. Anna was a sweet angel of consolation to me in my reverses, and I loved her better than ever. Just as I was beginning to recover from that blow, and consider what was best to be done both for her and myself, another followed, more crushing still, for it snatched from me the best treasure of my life and made me poor indeed.

"A letter for Anna came from New York, and I gave it to her with my own hand, never suspecting the fatal nature of its contents. She read the dying confession of Charles Linley, which assured her that she was not a wife. He knew that she was living with me under that delusion, and he stated that he could not die without revealing to her the wickedness of which he had consented to become the instrument."

Mr. Hastings paused, overcome by the painful and humiliating memories that crowded on his mind.

With flashing eyes Nina exclaimed:

"And my mother refused to accept such tardy justice as you would then have been willing to afford. Was it not so, sir?"

He looked at her reproachfully, and drearily replied:

"No—she could not refuse what was never offered. The scene that passed between us destroyed all hope of future happiness with the being I had so deeply outraged. I plainly saw that I would never be forgiven, and I forebore to take on myself or put on her a yoke that could but gall us both. On Anna's part all confidence was destroyed, and she seemed to have but one wish—to escape from me and return to the home she had deserted."

"I represented to her the impossibility of taking her child there with her, and she coldly replied that the child was mine to do as I pleased with. *She* had the right to go whither she pleased, but you belonged to me by the decision of the law if I chose to claim you, and she would not dispute my right to retain you.

"It is useless to dwell on the bitter suffering of those days. We parted forever. Anna wept many tears over you, but she never asked me to surrender you to her keeping. She knew well that, burdened with a young child, she could not hope to be received by her former friends, and to them she was bent on returning.

"I forced her to accept a considerable sum of money, though I almost impoverished myself to raise it, and she embarked for New York. I placed you in the care of a faithful nurse, and gave my attention to winding up my business. I saved enough to enable me to return to my native land at the end of a year, and place you in the family of Mr. Somers, whose wife was a cousin of my own. He undertook to carry out such arrangements as I might wish to make for you, and I came to Mississippi to resume the practice of my profession.

"I met with Mrs. Hastings, and dazzled by her beauty and fortune, I married her. I had heard nothing from Anna, for she had cut herself off from me as completely as if I were dead; but a few months after my own marriage I saw hers announced in a Southern paper. I was glad of it; I hoped she might find peace at least in the new tie she had formed; but from what I have since heard I fear it was not so.

"When you were little more than four years old, I caused you to be placed with Mrs. Lyme, and there you remained till you left her yourself. At one time I thought of bringing you here as my niece, but I feared that Mrs. Hastings would discover the deception, and I finally determined to leave you to suppose that you were to be left dependent on your own exertions, that you might be willing to accept the situation of governess to your sister. I could think of no other way to bring you beneath my roof, and through all these years, Nina, the most absorbing desire of my heart has been to have the little darling I had so tenderly petted brought back to the shelter of my own roof. Tell me that you forgive me the evil I have done—that you will love me, and remain here as the solace of my life."

Nina drew herself from the caressing arm that sought to enfold her. She bitterly said:

"So, even my own mother deserted me! Yet she was right to leave *your* child behind her, for what could she expect from her but ingratitude and hardness of nature? Yet you—*you!* the spoiler, ask me to forgive and love you! Is *that* in my power, do you think, Mr. Hastings?"

He shrank from the fire of her eyes, the cruel hardness of her tones, and almost humbly asked:

"Have you not humiliated me enough by forcing this confession from me, Nina? that you thus stab me to the heart by your unfilial reproaches! You do not know how deeply they wound me."

"*Unfilial!*" she repeated, with scorn. "What duty do I owe you, who outraged a good and true woman by putting so base a deception upon her? Though she deserted me in my babyhood, I avenge her cause by telling you to your face that I will never forgive you for the wrong you did her in the eye of the law alone. In that of Heaven, she is your true wife, and the daughter you have placed above me in everything is the illegitimate one—not I."

Her cheeks were flaming, her eyes flashing, and at that moment her beauty was that of an enraged tigress. Her father looked at her and shuddered. What spirit had he evoked in this creature who had it in her power to become a fearful Nemesis to him? He deprecatingly said:

"I have at least done my duty by *you*, Nina. You have little to reproach me with, for my tender care has always shielded you from harm, and my liberality has afforded you the advantages you have enjoyed."

"And what were they?" was the scornful rejoinder. "To be cast off from kith and kin; to be left to believe myself thrown upon the world without a provision, that I might fit myself for the inferior position in your family you thought fit to assign me. For what have I to thank you, oh! most tender and considerate father?"

The bitter mockery of her tones stung him; he arose and sternly and proudly replied:

"It is enough. The child I hoped would prove a comfort to me turns on me with reproaches, when I fondly expected a different return for what I have done for her. Most men would have left you to find your place in an orphan asylum, to be reared by charity and made the drudge of more fortunate people; but I—I loved you, and I endeavored by every means in my power to atone for the wrong I have done you, and this is my reward. Oh, Nina! in this hour I awake from the latest delusion of my life. Is there no pity for me in your heart, that you crush me in this reckless manner?"

Something in his tone seemed to touch her. She too arose, and, casting herself upon his breast, cried out:

"Take me to your heart, and make me feel that you do indeed love me by securing to me the happiness you can win for me, and I will be your child in affection as I am in blood."

Mr. Hastings folded her to his breast, and Nina felt his hot tears falling like rain upon her hair and brow. They assured her of her power over him, and she determined to use it to its utmost limit.

Again they seated themselves, and Nina submitted now to have his arm encircle her slender form. She looked up into his face with pleading eyes, and softly murmured:

"Forgive me, but my heart is very sore. You can scarcely understand my feelings, father. Ah! it is a humiliating and wretched thought that I can never bestow upon you that precious title save when we are alone. That I must stifle the natural feelings of my heart because a jealous eye is ever on us. How long do you think we can live in so painful and unnatural a position toward each other?"

"If I had not betrayed myself, we could have done so easily enough," he sadly replied. "I had settled it all in my own mind. After Opal's marriage, you would have fallen naturally into her place. I could have found a lover worthy of you, to whom I would have been willing to give you, and I should have found means to provide such a dower for you as would have been suitable to your actual position. But now all is changed, and I see plainly that it is for you to dictate what our future course shall be. State your wishes, Nina, and so far as I can I will carry them out."

"I have but one wish on earth," she impetuously exclaimed, "and you will think me mad when I express it; but I will do so, regardless of consequences. I was the first choice of Godfrey Fenton's heart; he loved me—I am *sure* he did; and I—oh, I, loved him to that degree that I shall perish at your feet if you persist in making Opal his wife! *She* cares nothing for him; you know that as well as I do; and he is marrying her for the fortune that will be hers. Make me rich enough to become his bride; break off the match that is in progress, and bring him back to his first allegiance. This is what I ask you to do—what *must* be done if you would save both your children from utter misery."

Mr. Hastings listened to this wild demand with a helpless feeling of bewilderment. He presently faltered:

"But that is impossible, Nina. I have no power to do what you ask. Fenton would never consent to such an exchange, and—and the fortune I hope to endow you with must be saved from my own allowance from my wife. She is very liberal, and the control I have over her large income will enable me in a few years to speculate and increase the small sum I can at present command. Besides, Mrs. Markland would never consent. Her heart is fixed on the union of her son with Opal."

"What does her consent signify?" she defiantly asked.

"It signifies so much that I dare not provoke her by proposing so wild a scheme as this. For years she has known the history of my connexion with your mother. A cousin of hers who was known to me in South America gave her all the details, and Mrs. Markland has held them in terrorem over me, threatening to reveal the whole story to my wife if I refused my consent to the union of her son with Opal."

"You are very weak to submit to such thraldom. What if she had told Mrs. Hastings?"

"I can easily answer that. A separation between us would have ensued, for Mrs. Hastings is almost insane on one subject. If she suspected that she was not my first love, that I had lived with another woman claiming her as my wife before I met her, she would leave me. That is why I submitted—why I have permitted this marriage to be hurried on before Opal is really old enough to become a bride. My dear Nina, recall your heart from the betrothed of your sister; forget the mad dream that has bewildered you, and trust your future to me. It shall be bright; I promise you it shall."

Nina burst into a hysterical passion of tears, and, with sobs of anguish, cried out:

"I cannot—I cannot! I love him—I love him, and he knows it. I have told him as much since I have been here. That evening on the lake, I spoke such words to Godfrey as he will never forget while life lasts. Send me away from here. I can not live and see him give himself to another! Let me go, I care not whither, so I escape seeing him bestow his hand upon my rival. I can not answer for myself. I might do something dreadful to Opal, and she has been good to me since I came here."

In extreme perturbation, Mr. Hastings reflected a few moments, and then sadly said:

"It will be best, perhaps. Since it is your wish, I will send you back to the North, and your allowance shall be liberal enough to enable you to live as my daughter should. Mrs. Somers will consent to receive you, I am sure; or, if you prefer it, you can return to Mrs. Lyme, and remain with her as a boarder. My care must still be over you, Nina, wherever you may go."

"Yes, you must provide for me suitably, I understand that. Oh, father, is it *impossible* to give me back my love—my life? Opal's heart is not in this marriage; she will rejoice if it is broken off."

"It will not be broken off, Nina. It is too late for that. Make up your mind to what is inevitable, for a few more weeks will find your sister on her way to Europe as Fenton's wife. If it were possible to arrest the hand of fate, I would do so for your sake, but I can not. You must submit to be guided by me, and I will do the best I can for your happiness and future welfare."

The excitement of the interview had exhausted Nina's strength, and she sunk back half fainting. Her father brought water from the sideboard in the hall, and bathed her hands and face; but he did not summon a servant to her assistance, lest the story of their long interview should be repeated to his jealous wife.

Finally, lifting her in his strong arms, he carried her to her room and placed her on the bed. Kissing her tenderly, he left her to such repose as she could find after the stormy emotions that had lately filled her heart, and returned to pace the library and think almost to madness of that one act in his early life which had clouded his days and filled his heart with remorse; for, weak as he was, Mr. Hastings was not altogether a bad man.

CHAPTER XLVI.

While Nina lay almost in the grasp of death, a telegram from Newport reached Godfrey Fenton, which made him feel for a season as if he would do what Job's comforters tempted him to in vain—"curse God and die."

The paper only bore these words:

"Mr. Horton's will is found, and in the possession of Miss Lopez."

After all, Inez would regain her inheritance, and he was bound to another! But for the opportune illness of Nina Gordon he would, by this time, have been the husband of Opal. Was there no avenue of escape? he asked himself. Was his honor too deeply pledged to his latest love to enable him to break through such impediments as he had himself created to perfect freedom of action.

In Fenton's pursuit of her rival, the passion he felt for Inez had lost much of its ardor, but in the first moment of learning that she would regain her fortune, he felt that Inez was the true choice of his heart; that the emotions Opal elicited were born of vanity and a desire of success with so lovely and so reticent a creature as he had found her to be.

In the rebound of his feelings all his old love for Inez revived in full force, and when a letter came from her, informing him of the death of her father, and the certainty that the estate would soon pass into her possession, Fenton prepared himself for a final contest with his mother.

He had not much hope of success; but he resolved to make a last effort to disenthral himself, if possible, from the bondage in which Mrs. Markland held him. After Dora and Jenny had set out for school the next morning, he sought his mother in her usual sitting-room and abruptly said:

"I have something to show you, mother, which is of deep interest to me. Here is a letter from Miss Lopez informing me that she has recovered her inheritance. I wish you to read it, for I think you will be touched by her artless expressions of confidence in me—of affection for one who has proved himself so unworthy to have won her love as I am."

Mrs. Markland coldly put aside the offered letter and icily said:

"I can only feel surprised to hear that Miss Lopez has written to you at all. If she had the true pride that a lady should possess, she would never seek to enter a family which she must be aware has already repudiated her alliance. The recovery of her fortune can make no difference to *you*, for you are in honor bound to fulfill your pledges to Opal."

"But, mother, I love Inez far the best; and Opal will not break her heart over my desertion, as, I am afraid, the other will. Besides, Inez will have great wealth entirely at her own disposal. If I gain that by my marriage, you need not care particularly which one is the bride elect."

"But I *do* care very much. It is my most ardent desire to claim Opal Hastings as my daughter, and I refuse to see Miss Lopez as such. Godfrey, if I thought you could be so false, so dishonored, as to break the tie you have formed for yourself, and that, too, on the very eve of your marriage, I would never speak to you again; I would no longer acknowledge you as my son. Have you no love for Opal that you can speak so coolly of giving her up? Think of all her beauty and sweetness—how tender her heart is, how gentle her disposition. She will make a model wife, and this young Cuban no doubt possesses all the fire of her countrywomen. She would never be the yielding and submissive wife that you will require. With your imperious temper, I am quite sure that you will find more happiness with Opal than with her rival."

Divided as his feelings were, Fenton listened to these arguments more calmly than his mother had hoped. He listlessly said:

"Perhaps you are right, ma'am, and—and—to tell you the truth, I hardly know which one I prefer. I was thinking more of Inez than of myself when I came here to appeal to you. She will suffer dreadfully when she becomes aware of my inconstancy. I really think that it will be better for all concerned for me to get out of this entanglement with the Hastings family, and give my hand to her who has the best right to it. I am bound in honor to both these girls; one adores me—the other accepts me because it is the will of others that she shall do so. I feel sure that Opal will gladly release me if I make an appeal to her, and I will do it if you will consent."

Mrs. Markland was quick to remark the difference in his manner of pleading now from that he had used but a few weeks before when he had entreated her to receive Inez as his wife. She had little faith in the depth or endurance of such love as Fenton had to give, and she was only more firmly determined that the bride she had chosen for him should be forced on his acceptance. She coldly replied:

"With my consent no such appeal shall be made to your betrothed. Of course she would reply by releasing you, for no other course would be possible to a refined and sensitive girl like Opal. You have keenly pursued her, for I have watched you through your wooing, and after professing such ardent love you have offered her, with what face can you turn on her and tell that it was all a sham? No, Godfrey; it is too late to recede now, and I feel assured that your heart is in the marriage that has been arranged for you, although you would persuade me that you still waver between the two you admire. Write to Miss Lopez and tell her the plain truth, or I shall do it for you."

"Mother," said Fenton, very gravely, "something tells me that I had better take the other course, that it will be safer for me to do so."

"*Safer?*" Do you think the jealousy of that Spanish girl will lead her to strike you to the heart? Absurd, my dear Godfrey! do not obscure your usual clear judgment with such ridiculous apprehensions."

"I scarcely know what I apprehend—certainly no personal injury from Inez, for she is incapable of inflicting it on any one; but I cannot put aside a presentiment that something dreadful will follow my union with Opal—I am haunted by it as by a shadow of evil."

Mrs. Markland scoffingly asked:

"How long is it since this prophetic spirit descended on you? and why should it foreshadow evil? In your position, I should have only the most brilliant anticipations. You are betrothed to the most charming of girls; you will have a liberal income secured to you, with the certainty of possessing great wealth at some future day; yet you talk in this lugubrious strain about presentiments. Do not give me cause to blush for your imbecility and vacillation, Godfrey."

Fenton yielded to his mother's influence, as he always did; and, with a sigh, said:

"You refuse then to read what Inez says? Her letter might touch you, for it deeply moved me."

"Give it to me!"

And Mrs. Markland held out her hand. With a sudden bound of hope, Fenton placed before her the lines Inez had so confidingly written; but, in place of reading them, his mother dropped the letter on the fire, and, as it flashed into a blaze, she decisively said:

"I will not read it, nor shall you do so again. What good could it do, when your destiny is positively settled? The first ardor of your fancy for that girl has passed away, and I will not permit you to sacrifice Opal to her. Leave to me the settlement of this difficulty. I will write to Miss Lopez at once and put an end to such delusions as she may cherish."

"I entreat that you will not do that, mother. If I *must* give Inez up, I will write to her myself and, as gently as I can, inform her of what is about to happen here. I could have been very happy with her I know, but I cannot estrange you forever from me, by disappointing you in the hope you have so long cherished. After all, Opal may, as you say, suit me best as a wife—she will not be apt to be jealous when I indulge my besetting sin of flirting with every pretty woman I meet."

Thus, coolly and selfishly, was a question settled which involved not only the happiness of two human beings, but which far more deeply concerned himself, if Fenton had only known it; but the dark curtain that conceals futurity allowed no glimpse of the risk he was incurring to penetrate its folds, unless his vague presentiments of evil were sent as a warning from the spirit-land.

Fenton did not much regard the destruction of the letter—the sight of Inez' writing no longer thrilled his soul with passionate joy as it once had done, and the scenes in which they had acted together seemed faded and dim beside the new excitement he had found in trying to win some proof of love from the shy and reserved Opal.

The one of whose affection he was assured sunk into insignificance beside the fair rival who, as yet, had given him no cause to believe that he had made himself master of her heart. The advantages of either marriage were so equally balanced that Fenton could afford to choose between them; and he decided to keep on good terms with his mother, and give the world in which he lived no opportunity to gossip about his ill-treatment of Miss Hastings.

Inez was far away—he could settle the whole difficulty without meeting her face to face, and very few near him would be aware that such an entanglement had ever existed. So the assurance Mrs. Markland so eagerly desired to gain was given, and he promised to write the truth to Inez at once.

But Fenton deferred this dreaded task from day to day—loth to strike the last blow to her trusting heart till it became absolutely necessary to do so.

The time in which Nina lay struggling back to life was passed by him in a state of painful uncertainty as to whether it would be best to write at all, or suffer Inez to infer his inconstancy from his silence.

A severe shock was given him by the arrival of another letter from her, in which she informed him that she was on the eve of setting out for Natchez, in compliance with the dying command of her father.

What was now to be done? Inez was already on her way; she might arrive any day, and after his first perturbation subsided, Fenton hurried to his mother, and advised with her as to what should be done. With indignant surprise, Mrs. Markland listened to what he had to tell, and exclaimed:

"I never heard of anything so indelicate in my life! The girl has actually followed you up, thinking that she would leave you no alternative but to marry her. If I had been before willing that she should become your wife, this step would have disgusted me to that degree that I should have withdrawn my consent. I shall certainly give her to understand what my opinion of such conduct is."

"You will have no occasion to come in contact with her at all, mother; and—and, I really do not think that you should judge Inez so harshly. She is but a young girl, quite ignorant of life, and her father's dying wish had all the sacredness of a command to her. I only wish that I could meet her as my heart prompts, and marry her as soon after she lands as possible. In spite of all that you say about honor, I feel that I am bound to her by that more than to Opal."

"Godfrey, it is enough to provoke a saint to witness the fluctuations of your feelings. Yesterday you were jealous of Guy Denham because he called at Silvermere and Opal changed color when he came in; and to-day you are ready to give her up to him and go back to your old love. It is shameful for any man to vacillate so. Your choice has been made, and you must abide by it."

The mention of Denham's name produced the effect Mrs. Markland had intended. Fenton disliked him, and he felt certain that in taking Opal from him he had repaid all the early heart-burnings that had arisen between them. In their boyish contests, Denham had nearly always come off conqueror; but in this one most vital to his happiness Fenton had proved the victor, and he would not resign that which he knew was so dearly prized, so ardently coveted, by his rival. So he moodily said:

"I am quite satisfied with my last choice, ma'am; but I have come to you to consult as to what is to be done with reference to Miss Lopez. I cannot see her; I dare not; but some one must meet her on her arrival in Natchez, and inform her of the state of affairs here."

"I will go myself, if that is all; and I think that I shall give this imprudent young lady some advice that will be useful to her."

Fenton shrank from this proposal. The blow would be severe enough, let it fall as lightly as it might; and his mother was the last one he would have been willing to allow the privilege of dealing it. He hastily replied:

"That would never do, mother. With my consent, you and Inez shall not meet at all. There is no need that you shall trouble yourself about her. Anna knows her very well, and they like each other. I will ask her to meet Inez, and take her to her house to explain to her there all that is necessary to be told."

"Very well; I am not anxious to take this awkward affair on myself if it can be avoided. Anna will do anything to serve you, though she cares very little for me. You may ask her to stand your friend, and Guy may console himself for the loss of Opal and her thousands by making love to your former divinity."

Fenton was now really angry, and, with flashing eyes, he said:

"She will never listen to him. False as I have proved myself, Inez will never give her hand to any other man."

"Then she is different from all other women," sneered his mother. "Don't play the part of the dog in the manger, Godfrey. You cannot marry both these girls, and if Guy can secure so great an heiress as you assert Miss Lopez to be, it will be a good thing for him."

"Perhaps it will, madam," replied Fenton, more calmly. "I will go over to Ashwood this morning and place my dilemma before Anna. She has been very cool to me of late, but I do not think she will refuse me this favor for the sake of Inez herself."

He rang the bell, ordered his horse to be brought around, and was soon speeding away on his errand.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

Job Dodge—Or the Stormy Day.

It was a half-drizzling, half-stormy day in the middle of November—just such a day as puts nervous people in a bad humor with themselves and everybody else. Job Dodge sat brooding over the fire immediately after breakfast. His wife addressed him as follows:—"Job, can't you mend that front-door latch to-day?" "No," was the answer. "Well, can't you mend the handle of the water-pail?" "No." "Well, can't you fix a handle to the mop?" "No." "Well, can't you put up some pins for the clothes, in our chamber?" "No." "Well, can't you fix that north window, so that the rain and snow won't drive in?" "No—no—no!" answered the husband, sharply. He then took his hat, and was on the point of leaving the house, when his wife, knowing that he was going to the tavern, where he would meet some of his wet-day companions, asked him kindly to stop a moment. She then got her bonnet and cloak, and said to her husband, "You are going to the tavern; with your leave I will go with you." The husband stared. "Yes," said the wife, "I may as well go as you; if you go and waste the day, and tipple at the tavern, why shall not I do the same?" Job felt the reproof. He shut the door; hung up his hat; got the hammer and nails; did all his wife had requested, and sat down by his fire at night, a better and happier man.

Greatness of Mind.

A Corsican, the leader of a gang of banditti, who had been famous for his exploits, was at length taken and committed to the care of a soldier, from whom he contrived to escape. The soldier was tried, and condemned to death. At the place of execution, a man, coming up to the commanding officer, said, "Sir, I am a stranger to you, but you shall soon know who I am; I have heard that one of your soldiers is to die for having suffered a prisoner to escape: he was not at all to blame; besides, the prisoner shall be restored to you. Behold him here—I am the man. I cannot bear that an innocent man should be punished for me, and I come to die myself." "No," cried the French officer, who felt as he ought the sublimity of the action, "thou shalt not die, and the soldier shall be set at liberty. Endeavor to reap the fruits of thy generosity: thou deservest to be henceforth an honest man."

* * *

—A wise man's kingdom is his own breast: or if he ever looks farther, it will only be to the judgment of a select few who are free from prejudices, and capable of giving him solid and substantial advice.

THE COMFORTERS.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

He has not seen the sky long while,
And yet it wears its olden smile:

He has not seen for many a day
The mountains' mighty towers,
And yet they're brightly paradised
With emerald trees and flowers:

He has not heard great Ocean's note,
For many a year around him float,
With mystic splendor lighting all,
From sandy shore to mountain wall:

All Nature has been closed to him
As much as though a hand of fire
In wrath, obeying iron Fate,
Had turned her to a pyre;

And yet no word of grim complaint
Groans from his wasted lips—
His beautiful, pure *Spirit* wreathes
With roses the eclipse;

For Memory calls all up again,
Exulting in the Ocean strain,
And in the mountain's flowered rocks,
The sky's broad light or thunder shocks;
But grander, sweeter yet the thought—
"Though Nature veils her real face,
Yet on her fullest glories gaze
Millions of my dear Race!"

SCRAPS OF ADVENTURE.

FROM AN OLD SAILOR'S LOG-BOOK.

No. XXVI.

By SYLVANUS COBB, Jr.

THE OLD FLAG.—A THRILLING ADVENTURE.

"EIGHT BELLS!" announced the orderly at the cabin-door.

And the messenger-boy came forward and struck them.

And then the shrill pipes of the boatswain and his mates came piercing through the air to announce that dinner was ready.

But I did not hurry down; nor did Fiddy Cummings; for just then we saw a flying-jib coming into sight beyond Europa Point. Then came the jib; then the fore-staysail; then the heavier canvass of the foremast; then the loftier sails of the mainmast; then came the mizzen; streak after streak of the spanker came in sight; and presently, like a bright and beautiful spirit of heaven, floating out upon the generous breeze, we beheld that glorious old flag, bearing upon its emblazoned field the type of Union and the emblem of Liberty. It was to us a cheering sight, and ere I knew that such emotions were stirring within me I found tears coursing down my cheeks.

O! ye dwellers in this Land of Blessed Memories—ye inheritors of Freedom's Boon—little know ye of the glorious beauty of that Starry Flag, and little wot ye of its marvellous power to move the hearts of those who love it, until it has burst upon your vision in some far-off clime when your yearning soul hath been long and vainly turning its desires homeward!

Fiddy and I waited until we had seen the American ship brace her yards and change her helm for entering the Bay, and then we went below and got our breakfast. When we returned to the spar-deck we found that the ship had cast a single anchor, and that her sails were only drawn up by the clewlines and buntlines, as though she did not intend to furl them. She had signalized for the Health-officer, and I saw a boat putting off from the sally-port.

"Depend upon it, Beck., she isn't going to stop long," said Fiddy. "I'm afraid we sha'n't have a chance to send our letters."

I looked aft, and saw Mr. McGregor upon the quarter-deck; so I went to the main fife-rail and touched my hat. The officer of the deck asked me what I wanted; but I did not have to tell him, for just then the first lieutenant came and spoke to me.

"What is it, Burton?"

I told him that Fiddy and I wished to send letters home by the American ship. I stopped here, and dropped my eyes to the deck, and he knew very well what was upon my mind, for he said to me:

"One favor at a time, my boy, and you'll be more likely to have it granted. Would you lose your prize-money for the sake of going away in that ship?"

I looked up, and told him that I had a mother, and a brother and sister, where that ship was going.

Mr. McGregor shook his head.

"It's no use," said he. "I don't know what I might be persuaded to do if I had authority; but I can tell you that Captain Trevelyan would not lose you on any account. Look ye: You know we have had far more than our complement of men. We have been recruiting for the service, and we've got to let a number of our hands go. If the plan is carried out that was first made, you will be sent on board another ship. How should you like that?"

The simple proposition was agonizing. I told the lieutenant I would rather stop on board the Bristol in irons than be sent on board another British ship.

"Well," said he, with a kindly smile, "I shall gain for you the privilege of both yourself and your companion's remaining with me. And now, my boy, go and bring your letters, and as soon as the American ship obtains pratique I will send them on board."

I saw that he did not wish me to ask him anything more, so I turned away; and having called Fiddy, we went below, where we finished our letters. I had already written three full sheets, and though they contained the only journal I had kept since I had been on board the Bristol, I let them go, trusting to my memory to make another. The master-at-arms let me have a candle and some sealing-wax, and when all was ready I took the letters up to the mast, where Mr. McGregor came and got them.

"Did you write this superscription?" he asked, as he looked at the direction upon the letter.

I told him I did. He made no further remark, but I could see by his look that he thought the writing extremely good, and I was proud.

The American ship, as I afterwards learned, had come last from Naples, with a clean bill of health, so she received pratique at once; and as soon as it was known on board our ship, Mr. McGregor had the second cutter called away, and sent Charles Trevelyan with the letters. When he returned I met him in the gangway and asked him what ship it was, and where it was from.

He told me it was the "*Benjamin Franklin*," and that she belonged in Baltimore.

How glad I was! I had thought to myself,—suppose she should be from Salem, or Boston, and had some one on board whom I knew; but, hailing from a port so far from my home, she seemed more like a stranger, and my burden of disappointment in not having been permitted to go on board was immeasurably lightened.

At four o'clock the "*Benjamin Franklin*" hove up her anchor and made sail, and just as she was disappearing from view beyond the western headland of the bay, Jack Miller came and sat down by my side.

"Becket," said he, "I never told ye about that adventure I had in the Bay o' Tangier."

"No," said I; "and I'd like to hear it."

With a few flourishes, such as Jack always gave when about to spin a yarn, he commenced his story as follows:

"It's just seven years ago this last September—the year before the battle of Trafalgar—I was a fore-topman aboard the frigate *Cordova*. She was one 'at was took from the Spanish in ninety-two. My eyes! she wasn't much such a craft as this, my boy. She was a reg'lar tub of a thing, half way between a Dutch galliot and a Newcastle coal-scow. But she had heavy guns aboard, and answered very well to lay up under an old sand-stone fort and batter at the walls. We was layin' here at Gibraltar when news come 'at there was trouble with our consul in Tangier; so out we goes, with another frigate and two sloops-o'-war, to see what was the matter. Arter a while we found out 'at our consul was more to blame than the shore chaps had been, so 't we didn't have the sport o' pepperin' them old sand forts as we'd 'lotted on. Howsumever, we had to lay there a couple o' weeks or so to get at the truth, and durin' that time we made ourselves as comfortable as we could. It was a hot spell, and two or three times a week the captain used to let us take a duck overboard. We used to go in at four o'clock in the arternoon. D'ye know how we fix it aboard a man-o'-war for swimmin'?"

I was forced to confess my ignorance, and Jack explained:

"Ye see, sometimes there may be danger o' sharks; and then agin, there may be danger of a man's havin' the cramp, jumpin' right into the cold water; so we just rig out and sink the bunt of the lower stud'n's'ls. The foot of the sail is made fast to the swingin'-boom, and the head is triced up to the main-yard, just lifting the leeches clear o' the water; then two or three round shot are put into the bunt, and that sinks it, so't there's room inside o' the sail for fifty or sixty men to splash 'round about as they please.

"Well, one arternoon all hands was called to go in swimmin,' an' I concluded 'at I'd take a dip; but I wanted to swim, and I meant to take a bit of a frolic on my own hook; for there wasn't room for much spread in the bunt of the stud'n's'l. So when I'd stripped, I just made a dive out o' the larboard bridle-port, and swum around to the stud'n's'l; an' while I was hangin' on to the bolt-rope, Sam. Pollard, one o' the cap'ns of the fore-top, stumped me to swim out to the buoy with him. 'Come on,' says I, and away we went. As I struck, out he made a dive right alongside o' me, so't we started fair; but we didn't keep together a great while. I could outswim him easy, and I left him behind with the first twenty strokes. We was swimmin' for the starboard buoy, an' as we had out a good stretch o' cable, of course it was a good distance off. I'd got about two-thirds of the way, an' was beginning to feel a bit tired, when I heard Sam. cry out as though something was the matter with him. I stopped swimmin', and trod water while I turned around to see what he wanted. He was near enough so 't I could see his face, an' I saw 't he looked frightened.

"'What's the matter?' says I.

"'Look!' says he, in a voice 'at made me shake, and he p'inted away towards the offin'. I looked, an' directly I saw somethin' 'at made me feel weak and faint. My soul, Beck.! it makes me weak now to think of it. Out towards the great ocean, with a dead calm makin' the surface of the bay almost like glass, an' not more 'n a cable's length away, I saw a black speck, like the p'int of a big knife, cuttin' through the water right towards me. D'ye know what 'twas, Beck.?"

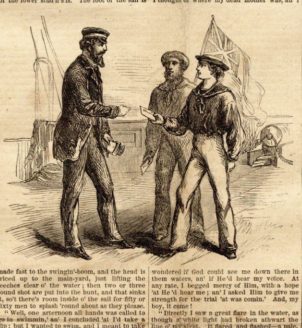
"Yes," said I, shuddering.

"Aye," Jack continued, catching his breath, "a man who'd seen that thing once in his life never could mistake it. IT WAS A SHARK—AND A BIG ONE! and he was makin' straight for me. I called out for Sam. to come and help me, for I thought mebbe two of us could trouble the monster and worry him like; but Sam. had struck out for the ship, and I couldn't blame him. I took a look at the frigate, an' I could see 'at the men were horror-struck. They had seen the shark and they know'd my danger. But what could I hope from them? Mind ye, Beck., what I'm now tellin' I caught in an instant. I saw the men crowding into the ports and over the hammock nettin's; and just as I thought how little they could help me, I saw the third cutter come dashin' around the bows, the men pullin' for dear life. But what could they do? They was more'n three times as far off as the shark was. All this I'd seen in a second, and then I turned to look at the shark. One single tick of a clock I seed that awful black fin cuttin' through the water—now not more 'n twenty yards away.—Just cast yer eyes aft to the mainmast, my boy. There—he was as nigh to me as that—just about. *And then he went down!* D'ye know what that meant? Of course ye do. Ye know them chaps attack their prey from underneath; and he'd just sunk to take me. I shouldn't see him again till he was right under me!

"My God, Beck., it was dreadful! And what d'ye suppose I thought of? I can't tell ye all the thoughts 'at went through my mind, but I can tell ye how they went. Just you take a charge o' powder, and pour it out on deck, an' then touch a red-hot loggerhead to it. Can ye tell how quick 'twill all flash? Well, that's the way 'twas with my thoughts. I saw a little stone-cottage down in Surrey, on the Ryegate road. I saw a little boy and a little girl playin' on the green; I saw a stout man, just at sunset, come home from the shop, and a woman come out from the cottage to meet him. It was me, and my sister, and my father, and my mother. Then there was another picter in the church-yard; an' I seed two graves there, where my father an' my mother was laid away long ago. An' I seed that sister grow'd to be a woman, with children of her own; and I wondered if she would ever know what had become of poor Jack. And there was more, my boy—more'n I can tell—'at flashed through my mind just while the loose powder'd be flashin' on the deck. It was as though the whole picter of my life had been all rolled up like a flag, an' the halliards bound by a bit o' tender spun-yarn, an' then run up to the peak; an' when the quartermaster broke the yarn, the little ball opened, and the broad flag was spread to the breeze in a second.

"I seed this, an' then come the thought—What can I do? The boat was comin' up swiftly, fairly jumpin' out o' water at every pull; but I know'd she couldn't reach me afore the shark did. It was as impossible as it would be for that yer messenger-boy to strike a bell less'n once! Howsumever, the first weakness was gone, an' I found my strength all come back. Ye se, I hadn't been swimmin' a bit since I'd first heard Sam.'s cry; and the treadin' water had kind o' rested me. It's my nater, Beck., for awful danger to make me strong when the pinch comes; an' I tell ye, I was strong then. I know'd 'at the shark wer' a coward. The very way he makes his attack shows it; an' the thought struck me 't I might hold him off by frightenin' him, till the boat reached me. Good gracious! there wasn't only one thing I could do. If I should strike out to swim, that would be sure death, as if I held still an' let the cuss come up an' nab me as he pleased. So I just stood there in the water, makin' motion enough with my feet to keep me up, an', at the same time, keepin' a sharp look-out down towards the p'int where the shark would be likely to turn.

"Beck., I tell ye 'at, durin' them few seconds, I thought of where my dead mother was, an' I wondered if God could see me down there in them waters, an' if He'd hear my voice. At any rate, I begged mercy of Him, with a hope 'at He'd hear me; an' I asked Him to give me strength for the trial 'at was comin.' And, my boy, it come!



"Directly I saw a great flare in the water, as though a white light had broken athwart the line o' my sight. It flared and flashed—a pale, greenish white,—as the shark turned upon his back right under me, ready to shoot up with that awful mouth open. I could do but one thing, and, as I'd been holdin' my strength for that one trial, I was ready. With all my might, I sprang up as high as I could; then I turned and dove down like a shot, for, I tell ye, I was handy in the water. I plunged down, with my eyes open, an' made a grab—I didn't notice where, for 'twas a matter of life an' death, an' life an' death was so mixed up 'at there was no tellin' which was mine. As I had hoped, the flourish frightened the shark, an' he whopped over on to his belly, an' scooted off. Most likely, in all his life, he'd never see'd just such an animal as attacked him then.

"As soon as he scooted I come to the top to take breath. The boat was close on to me, an' I saw a man standin' in the bows with a boat-hook. Right or wrong, I couldn't resist the temptation, an' I struck out with all my might for the boat. The helmsman sheered her a bit, an' as her bows passed me I caught her gun'l. Two of the men took me under the arms, an' just then that awful white glare flashed in the water again. I cried out for 'em to bear a hand. I struggled, an' so did they. My breast was over the gun'l when I felt a cold touch on my right foot, an' then a sharp pain. I screamed with all my might, an' as my shipmates drew me inboard the shark come half his bigness out o' water. The man in the bows punched at him with his boat-hook, and frightened him off.

"I was safe, Beck., and the only harm I got was a bad bite on the heel an' the bottom o' my foot. I'll show ye."

Jack pulled the shoe and stocking from his right foot, and showed me four deep, broad scars, running from the heel down to the ball of the foot, where the sharp teeth of the shark had torn their way through the flesh. And as the old fore-topman pulled on his stocking, he asked me if I didn't call that a pretty narrow chance for life.

Aye—more than that. I shuddered as I thought of it, and acknowledged to him that it would be hard to conceive of a situation more dreadful.

"The stud'n's'l was rigged out once arter that," said Jack, in conclusion, "but there weren't many of the men wanted to go in, for there'd been two sharks seen hangin' around the ship, an' there was no knowin' but they might be bold an' ravenous enough to attack the swimmers even in there."

We had now been at Gibraltar eight days. Our prizes had been turned over to government, and taken in hand by the Admiralty; the crews had returned to our ship; and all was ready for selecting out those who were to be transferred on board other vessels. Most of them were wanted to go on board a seventy-four that was under sailing orders for some station outside.

One forenoon the crew was mustered; but they didn't find many, after all, to send away. We had had thirty-four men killed, and of the wounded ten had since died, leaving only two hundred and four men. The full complement of the Bristol was a hundred and eighty men, including all officers not commissioned; and as Captain Trevelyan expected to be sent out upon a cruise he begged hard for all the men he had; and finally, as near as I could learn—and I got my information from Billy Hull—the Bristol kept two hundred men just by Trevelyan's assuming the responsibility of retaining them. So, after all, we only let four go. After it was all over I saw the captain and Mr. McGregor laughing, and I heard enough to understand that they were making merry over the discomfiture of the captain of the line-of-battle ship, who had expected to get thirty of our men at least.

That evening Mr. McGregor called me to him on the quarter-deck.

"Becket," said he, "we have permission from the admiral to grant liberty to those of our men whom we can trust. Have you thought that you would like to go on shore?"

"Yes, sir," I replied; and I spoke earnestly, for my desire was strong to view the wonderful fortifications of the place.

"And," he continued, "if I let you go, have I your word that you will make no attempt to desert?"

"Mr. McGregor," I said, "were you to ask me to promise that I would never attempt to desert from this service, I could not do so; but I do give you my word of honor that I will never betray any confidence you may see fit to repose in me. If you will let me go on shore, I will report to you at the time specified, if I am alive and able to move."

"All right, my boy. You and Cummings shall go on shore to-morrow."

I went forward and told Fiddy of our good fortune, and in view of the anticipated pleasure we almost forgot for the season that we were impressed seamen, serving a foreign power against our wills.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

TRIANA.—You can find a full account of the celebrated "Diamond Necklace" business in Carlyle's essays, he having taken especial pains to hunt down and sift out all the facts of the case. It is a long story, but the main facts are that a jeweller of Paris became seized with a mania to make, and did make, the most magnificent and the costliest necklace ever known. It was so costly, in fact, that nobody could buy it. Even the King of France (Louis XVI.) could not afford to buy it for the Queen (Marie Antoinette.) As the jeweller's entire fortune was absorbed in the necklace, he began to get wild over it, and fell into a state of mind which enabled a set of sharpers to impose upon him. One of the set was a woman named La Motte, who resembled the Queen so much that, with a little dressing up, she could easily pass for her Majesty, where the light was not too glaring. The Prince Cardinal de Rohan, one of the wealthiest men of his time, happened to be in disgrace with the Queen; and the conspirators managed to make him believe, by a series of impositions, that her Majesty was "dying" for the Diamond Necklace, which her royal husband would not buy for her, and that she longed for it to such a degree that if the Cardinal should purchase it for her, she would receive him again into favor at court. So he agreed to purchase it; came to Versailles to complete the business; saw La Motte and kissed her hand by moonlight under the hallucination that she was the Queen; the jeweller produced the necklace at the palace and delivered it to one of the conspirators who pretended to be the Cardinal's agent; and, of course, that was the last that was seen of it by honest people. The jeweller was left anxiously waiting for his pay, and the Cardinal was left anxiously waiting for his summons to appear before the Queen, and be publicly restored to royal favor. Both were disappointed; and the poor jeweller, unable to contain himself, made a public row, and the whole thing came out. The Queen was greatly scandalized, and the public always believed that she actually cheated the jeweller out of his necklace; and it was thought that the memory of the affair deprived her of much sympathy which she might otherwise have had, when she afterwards came to be put on trial for her life, before the revolutionary tribunal.

J. C. D., of Minnesota, sends us the following statement. He says: "I have just been reading a paragraph, copied from one of your city papers, which made my heart bleed. Here it is: 'M—— B——, a young man of 16, was so depressed, while contemplating his mother's extreme destitution and want, that, in a moment of desperation, he stole a surveyor's quadrant from a room in Cooper Institute. His mother was starving, and he was faint with hunger. His story was confirmed, and yet he had to be committed for trial.' Now, Mr. Editor, I feel as though I wanted to say something to the poor young people of your city, for I was born there myself, sixty-five years ago, in Orange street, opposite the famous old 'Tea-water Pump.' That section of the city was then rather low, and I believe it afterwards became a great deal worse. I was an orphan from early infancy, and was kicked and buffeted about, with no one to care whether I lived or died, till the war of 1812, when I started for Albany, all by myself, to see a sister who was living there. But, not meeting with a kind reception at her house, I went off by myself, to make my own way, and learned a trade, and also how to work on a farm, and went to sea a few voyages besides, so as to be sure to know enough practical things to be always able to find work that I could do in a workmanlike manner. I made quite a little fortune, but lost it in the great *morus multicaulis* or *silk* fever; but I've made up for it; and now, here in Minnesota, I have 160 acres of land, and a plenty of cattle, horses, hogs, poultry, farming-utensils, and a big family too, all doing well, and contented and happy. Now, then, a shilling a day is $39.12 a year, leaving out Sundays; and what young man couldn't save a shilling a day? Let him do this, *or, at any rate, do his best according to his wages*, and come out West, where, if he is honest and industrious, *he can't go amiss for work and friends*; and the same is true of young women, too. But their honesty must be of the true kind, and have the real grit of a grindstone, and then it will sharpen up every thing in their favor. Don't stay there in New York, where to be poor is to perish, but come out here, where there is plenty of land, and a chance for all."

A. W. L.—What is meant by a "take," among printers, is the portion of copy, or matter, which is given to a compositor at any one time for him to "set up" or put in type. In daily-paper offices, where work has to be rapidly done, an article is often divided up into small portions; these portions are then numbered, and given out singly to compositors; and each of them is called a "take." The word "fat" is not applied to *the act of printing*, but to the copy, or "takes," and means that when the matter is set up there are a good many short or blank lines in it. When the amount of matter which a compositor has set up—that is, when the amount of work which he has done is measured—a short line, or a blank one, counts just as much as a full one, although of course there is less type-setting, or work, in a short or blank line than in a full line. For this reason matter which when set up, or put in type, has a good many short or blank lines, is called "fat,"—that is to say, *favorable, lucky*, "a good thing," or anything of the kind you please.

N. Y. S.—The best way to ascertain how much water (by measure) it takes to weigh three pounds, would be to obtain a pair of accurate scales, and weigh out the three pounds of water, and then measure it with care. By this means, all parties could see for themselves just what the fact is. A gallon of water, according to the old English wine gallon, which is almost exactly equivalent to the present standard gallon of the United States, weighs 8⅓ pounds avoirdupois. Taking this as the standard, it would take one quart and eleven-twenty-fifths of a quart (very nearly three pints) to weigh three pounds.

BALTIMORE.—The fact that you were cordial to your friend, and also to the gentleman whom, with your permission, he brought with him, was not sufficient to amount to an invitation for them to call again. Your omission to ask them to repeat their call afforded a sufficient reason to them for supposing that you did not wish them to call again; but it is extravagant for them to interpret your well-meant, though mistaken, course as an *insult*. Your statement of the case, and of your intentions, should be sufficient for them, as it would be if they were real gentlemen.

ICHABOD.—It has often been stated, in public prints, that one hundred bushels of wheat to the acre have been grown in some parts of California, and that sixty bushels to the acre is not an uncommon yield in that State. It would not do for you to risk anything on such statements, however, without first making inquiry of some one having actual knowledge as to their trustworthiness.

N. A. V.—It is proper for you to try to find or communicate with the uncle who parted in anger with your parents when you was a little fellow only four years old. "Blessed are the peace-makers." Your parents' sorrow over the headstrong enmity of your uncle is proof sufficient of their sympathy with you in your efforts at conciliation. We hope you will be successful.

F. L.—The places which you heard pronounced "Cancerauger" and "Chicketauger" in your travels in the western part of this State, which you could not find in your Railroad Guide, nor on any map, are respectively spelt, in printed works, *Canaseraga* and *Checktowaga*, and, by looking for them in such orthographic attire, you will have no difficulty in finding them.

O. H. Z.—The specimen verses of your "satire of over three hundred lines," which you have sent us, lead us to believe that it would not be suitable for our columns.

DISSIMILARITY.—Here is a nice style of man. Hear him. He says: "I was married when much younger than now to a virtuous and industrious young lady; but unfortunately for my happiness, I soon discovered that there was a total dissimilarity in our tastes and opinions. I am extremely fond of reading, and frequently tried to interest her by reading aloud, from the charming works of Scott, Dickens, Irving, Prescott, Motley, &c., but always discovered that she had not followed me at all; and, in fact, I can never interest her in reading anything but the details of the last horrid murder. So great is our dissimilarity of tastes that I frequently have a sense of isolation and loneliness that is almost unbearable. Thanks to my Puritan education, the memory of my mother, and a sense of honor, I have put down all thoughts of attempting to procure a divorce. Among my acquaintance is a young lady whose tastes and opinions are almost in exact accord with my own; and we have formed quite an intimate friendship; and I am sorry to acknowledge that I have more pleasure in her society than in that of my wife. Now, the points upon which I wish to get your opinions are these: To what extent should I indulge myself in this lady's society? Ought I to break off our intimacy entirely? Allowing I do break off the intimacy, what reason can I give that would not be insulting to her?" You are a canting hypocrite. Had you never made the acquaintance of this "congenial young lady" it is not probable that your wife's "dissimilarity" would ever have assumed its "unbearable" type. Read your books to yourself and let your wife alone. Don't bore her with them, but let her enjoy herself in her own way. As for the "congenial" young lady, let her go. You need not give her any reason for staying at home and behaving yourself like a decent husband.

A SORE-HEARTED WIFE says: "I have two children, and am a member of an evangelical church which requires a small contribution, and at least *occasional* attendance, from *all* its members. My husband, an industrious laborer, is a member of a different denomination, but of lax morals. He will not take me to my meeting, or pay anything on my account, and swears if I ask him. Can the *Ledger* give me some advice? I dare not forsake my God, or abandon my chosen church. I can not leave my children, or carry them along several miles. I can not worship my Saviour at home, with a blaspheming husband. What can I do?" You should begin by reading the Sermon on the Mount, in a prayerful spirit, and with a continual breathing-forth of your soul to God for illumination and guidance. By doing this, and looking at the matter with that calmness which comes of such religious exercise, you will probably begin to see that your first and highest duty is to your own home—your husband included. Were you truly penetrated by the spirit of real Christianity you would meekly and religiously bear all the ills of your condition, trusting all things to your Saviour, and would let your light so shine that your husband, seeing your good works, would be lead also to glorify God.

LECTURER.—If you are green enough to expect to please *everybody*, you should retire to some Jericho, and there remain until your mental beard be grown. The kinds of birds are not more various than the minds of men. Though a man should have as many heads as Hydra, and as many hands as Briareus, and each head should reason differently and each hand write in a different vein, he could not satisfy all the component parts of that wonderful conglomerate, the public mind. The best thing to do under the circumstances is to write and speak independently, courteously, cheerfully, and with a due regard to moral principle—saying nothing that *ought* to offend any one whose good opinion is worth cultivating.

SARATOGA.—The woman who, on finding that the man she had married already had a wife then living, in a fit of spite, at once married another man, could not be convicted of bigamy, because the first marriage was null and void. She was not bound to the bigamist who had deceived her, not being his lawful wife, and was therefore free, so far as the law of the case was concerned, to marry at her own will and pleasure. If she was the lawful wife of the bigamist, he was of course her lawful husband. It must then follow that a man can have two lawful wives and be the lawful husband of two women, at the same time; and yet, for establishing such a *lawful* state of things, he is punished as a law-breaker.

YOUNG LANDLORD.—The rule which you say you have been taught and have hitherto followed, "to say nothing of a person if you could not speak well of him," is a very good one, and you would do well to continue to adhere to it. The disagreeable tenant, who is living in a part of your house, need not interfere with your adhesion to the rule. You can let him alone; and if people, of whom he may hereafter wish to hire a house, should inquire of you as to his character, you can decline to say anything about him. Perhaps you are as disagreeable to him as he is to you. He may be a most excellent man as to honesty and other qualities desirable in a tenant, for aught that you allege against him.

H. B. D., who writes a neat, feminine hand, wants to know, "If gentlemen, as a general thing, are as confidential with gentlemen, as ladies are with lady friends, about love affairs?" This is really "going into the enemy's camp" for information; but, then, "all is fair in *love* and *war*" is a time-honored adage. We are glad to be able to state, that, so far as our information goes, *gentlemen* are very reticent about their love affairs; but it would seem from the question of our fair correspondent, that, so far as *her* information goes, ladies are rather "confidential" (that is, we suppose, communicative) with lady friends, about *their* love affairs.

S. J. H.—It is popularly believed that smoking is injurious to health, and yet the number of smokers is great. A great many doctors say that smoking is deleterious to health, "except in some cases," and yet a vast number of the doctors, including some who say that smoking is "deleterious," etc., are inveterate smokers, each one probably considering his case as being among the "excepted" ones. If any one supposes that the habit of smoking is injurious to *him*, he should present his special case to a competent physician and have it pronounced upon specifically.

CLEVELAND.—When the gentleman took leave of you and your lady friend who had called with you at his house, he should have made his adieus to both of you, and not confined them to your friend alone, ignoring your presence. His conduct might have been the result of ignorance, however, and not of intentional rudeness to you.

PROVIDENCE.—It is not a good plan for a girl to seek eleemosynary aid for the purpose of getting an education. Work, and earn your own money to pay your schooling with. Half an education fairly earned is worth a whole one begged,—and more too, for the very act of making one's own way is itself an education.

INQUIRER, (Fond du Lac).—A person who is quick to impute deceit, or improper motives, to a stranger, is pretty sure to be himself improper and deceitful. You are evidently in the wrong, and ought to be ashamed of such an exposition of weakness and unfounded suspicion as your statement exhibited.

ASTRONOMY.—The reason why the temperature is lower on the tops of high mountains than in less elevated places is one of the most elementary which your class will have to deal with, and your teachers should be able to explain it to you, and, doubtless, could and would do so, on your asking them.

L. A. W., (Ohiotown).—The first work most generally read by law-students in this country is Kent's Commentaries. You can probably find a copy in some lawyer's office in your village; or, if that be not attainable, you can get *some* work which will answer for you to begin upon.

F. W.—Should you carry out your convictions of duty, and help your little brother to an education, the chances are many to one that you would derive more comfort therefrom than all the money you could save by taking a different course would ever afford you.

⁂Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.

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